

vegetarian

LIVING

SIMPLE STYLISH COOKING

FRESH FLAVOURS
FROM ANNA JONES

**DINNER
DELIVERED** ✓
We put veggie recipe
boxes to the test

50
MEAT-FREE
RECIPES
32
DAIRY-FREE
IDEAS

**DO THE
BRIGHT THING**
RACHEL DEMUTH'S
VIBRANT SEASONAL
RECIPES

FRYING PAN
SQUASH AND
CAVOLO NERO
TART

HARVEST SUPPERS

Discover the bounty of
your September larder

AT HOME WITH VANILLA BLACK

A tempting menu from the
popular London restaurant

LET THEM EAT CAKE!

Try Kate Hackworthy's
veg-packed bakes



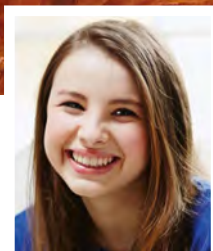
SOUL FOOD

Gizzi Erskine cooks
crowd-pleasing dishes
for easy entertaining



SWEET TREATS

Delicious desserts for
everyday eating and
special occasions



MINDFUL MEALS

Naturally Sassy
blogger Saskia's
healthy vegan food



PLUS: Natural beauty ideas | Fun for families | Get your five-a-day

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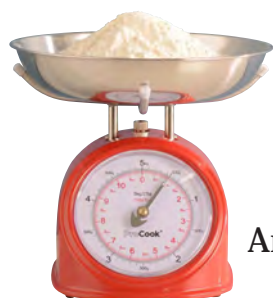
Welcome

As summer begins to wind down into early autumn, heralded by crisper mornings, shopping trips for back-to-school supplies and the arrival of plump squashes at the farmers' markets, it's time to enjoy the incredible bounty on offer at this time of year. If you eat with the seasons, you'll always enjoy produce at its peak of flavour and freshness, and in this issue we're celebrating some of the stars of September, from figs to sweetcorn and raspberries (from page 15), while chef Rachel Demuth launches her new seasonal column and recipe series with vibrant tomato, red pepper and beetroot recipes (from page 22).

The challenge of producing quick and tasty midweek meals can be a minefield, so we've been kitchen-testing the latest in convenience cooking – recipe box delivery services (page 42), while celebrated cookery author Anna Jones prepares nutritious and utterly mouth-watering food that's still simple enough for everyday eating (page 32).

Finally, for those with a sweet tooth, you must try vegetable-based bakes from Veggie Desserts blogger Kate Hackworthy, for a treat that's nice but not quite so naughty (page 72).

Tuck in!
Lindsey Harrad, Editor



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See page 50 for full details.

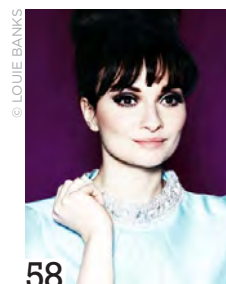
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ANNA JONES

'That's what cooking is for me – food that is flavour-packed, nourishing and not too fussy, that can be on your table in a life-friendly time and manner'



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GIZZI ERSKINE

'I've always lived by the 80/20 rule: if you eat healthily 80 per cent of the time then you're allowed a little bit of something that may be considered "naughty" the rest of the time'



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SASKIA GREGSON-WILLIAMS

'Purposeful eating is something I base all my recipes and meals around, using ingredients that heal, strengthen, reduce inflammation and increase energy'

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VANILLA BLACK
IN LONDON,
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Healthy vegan dishes from Saskia Gregson-Williams, a 17-year-old ballerina and blogger



Subscribe today and receive a fabulous gift for FREE! – see page 50



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Take a veggie-friendly break in Hungary, with Alex Bourke's eating-out guide

“My ‘root to stem’ philosophy means that everything from roast dinner peelings to juicer pulp and foraged ingredients, all find their way into my recipes”

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH KATE HACKWORTHY, ON PAGE 72

REGULARS

03 Welcome

07 Shopping List

For Organic September, we've been sampling organic staples and a few treats!





3-5 July 2015 Olympia, London
Find us at Stand A151

Lovely and bubbly leaving dishes sparkling

Find Ecozone at these retailers:

John Lewis

ocado.com
The online supermarket

HOLLAND & BARRETT
we're good for you

Dunelm

WHOLE FOODS

HOME BASE



Cruelty-Free INTERNATIONAL



www.ecozone.com

Thirsty work
Proof you don't have to give up any of your vices if you go organic. Fairtrade Gusto Cola uses a blend of botanical ingredients and spices to recreate that distinctive cola flavour – and it's low-calorie too.
£1.19 from Whole Foods Market and Ocado.



Pesto perfection

We love the new pesto collection from Mr Organic, which includes Basil and Sundried Tomato varieties, with a Red Pepper flavour launching soon. Based on traditional Italian recipes, unlike many brands these delicious Mr Organic pestos are suitable for vegans and vegetarians.
£2.99 from Ocado. Basil Pesto is also available from Planet Organic.

Sea snacks
The Clearspring sea vegetable range now includes light, thin and crispy toasted nori snacks made using only nori grown in the clear waters off the coast of Korea, unrefined sea salt and organic sesame and rapeseed oil.
89p from independent health food stores, selected supermarkets or www.clearspring.co.uk.



Cereal thriller

Packed with goji berries, and yacon flakes – for their probiotic properties, low-GI and complex oligofructose sugars – this Alara Into the Garden organic gluten-free muesli of rice and soya flakes, quinoa and buckwheat, is also topped off with pumpkin and sunflower seeds.
£4.99 from independent health food stores, Whole Foods Market and Amazon.

NATURALLY GOOD

In celebration of Organic September, choose from our pick of new and exciting organic products. Not just tasty, these goodies are produced naturally with reduced exposure to pesticides, so they're better for you and the environment.

Fizz fantastic

This re-sealable bottle of Wild Thing Prosecco, with gentle bubbles and soft apple and pear aromas, is delicate and refreshing, plus the sales of this brand support the Born Free Foundation. Vintage Roots make a donation for every bottle sold, and Organic September is a double donation month.
£7.99 from Planet Organic and www.vintageroots.co.uk.



Choc therapy

Indulge yourself with the Four Corners Collection Hazelnut Truffles from Booja-Booja, nine multi-award-winning, melt-in-your-mouth chocolate treats made with sweet roasted hazelnuts. All Booja-Booja products are organic, and free from dairy, gluten and soya.
£6.99 from independent wholefood shops, delicatessens, farm shops, luxury department stores, Waitrose, Goodness Direct and Ocado.



Frozen assets

Pip Organic now offers a range of healthy and delicious fruity ice pops that contain only 100% premium organic fruit with no added sugars, concentrates or water.
£1 a pop from Ocado, Abel & Cole, Tesco, Whole Foods Market and other fine food retailers.



All souped up
Tideford's Beetroot Soup with Pomegranate has a natural sweetness from organic carrots and parsnips, with a subtle kick from turmeric and coriander. Gluten-, wheat- and dairy-free, it's suitable for vegans, vegetarians and coeliacs.
£2.79 from Ocado, Whole Foods Market, Planet Organic, As Nature Intended, Selfridges and all well-known independents.

newshoots

ALL THE LATEST VEGETARIAN AND VEGAN LIFESTYLE NEWS AND PRODUCTS, PLUS WINE, EVENTS AND MUCH MORE...



ORGANIC SEPTEMBER

NEW CAMPAIGN SAYS YOU CAN EAT ORGANIC ON A BUDGET

Organic September is an annual campaign month led by the Soil Association to raise consumer awareness of organic food and increase sales, by encouraging people to make small changes to their shopping habits and buy organic in September – and beyond.

The Organic Trade Board (OTB), a not-for-profit membership organisation set up to grow organic sales and spread the message about the benefits of buying organic, has been running a successful Organic, Naturally Different campaign, led by campaign manager Catherine Fookes (inset), to help promote the facts about organic produce.

'We represent national supermarket chains, retailers, processors and manufacturers, and our members include Tesco, Waitrose, Ocado, Whole Earth, Green & Blacks, Riverford and Abel & Cole, plus independent stores and own-label suppliers,' says Catherine.

With the OTB's consumer research published earlier this year revealing that over a third of us (around 9.3 million) are buying organic food on a monthly basis, while 50 per cent of us claim we would buy more if availability was improved, there's clearly a growing appetite for more 'natural' foods.

'Our aim is to help people make an informed choice by explaining the positive benefits of organic,' says Catherine. 'For example, we point out that organic fruit and veg have lower pesticide residues, and this

is a fact widely published and proven by government-run tests. These residue reports consistently prove that non-organic fruit and veg have residues, and organic does not. Also organic producers of milk and eggs have higher animal welfare standards.'

Perhaps not surprisingly, the OTB's research also revealed that the organic consumer is more likely to be vegetarian than the general population. 'Lots of innovation in new products, by companies such as Biona and Clearspring, for example, is in producing new vegetarian food products,' says Catherine. 'Plus, it's undoubtedly easier to be a thrifty organic consumer on a vegetarian diet too.'

One of the main barriers to buying organic food has always been the higher cost, but the OTB is challenging the perception that organic is only accessible for well-off families. 'We've been working with vegetarian blogger Deliciously Ella as part of our new #ThriftyOrganic Challenge, to prove you can buy organic on a budget,' says Catherine. 'The average weekly food shop for two people is £59, not including alcohol, and Ella did fantastic things with this budget.'

'Things are changing – organic food is being "normalised", it's accessible to everyone and that's what our campaign is all about.'

● Find out more about organic foods at www.organictradeboard.co.uk and www.soilassociation.org.

TAKE THE THRIFTY CHALLENGE



Are you up for joining a #ThriftyOrganic Challenge? The OTB is challenging the nation to make the switch for one week to show that with savvy shopping and planning, we can all afford to put organic on the menu.

If you would like to join the #ThriftyOrganic Challenge, all you need to do is switch your normal weekly shop for organic produce – sticking to your usual budget (£59 per week for a couple and £83 per week for a family of four, excluding alcohol, based on Office of National Statistics average weekly shopping spend data).

Then, share your thrifty and organic creations and tips at @organicukfood or www.facebook.com/organicuk using #ThriftyOrganic.

● Check out Deliciously Ella's meal plan at www.deliciouslyella.com/eating-organic-food-on-a-budget.

Top #ThriftyOrganic tips

1 PLAN AHEAD With a bit of forward planning of your week's meals you will be able to make full use of your shopping basket, making food go further and avoiding waste.

2 EAT THE SEASONS By eating what's in season you'll be buying organic fresh produce when it's in abundance, so it will be at the best price and best quality.

3 BULK OUT YOUR MEALS WITH HEALTHY STAPLES Use beans, lentils or extra veg to make dishes go further. Add chickpeas to spicy curries or haricot beans to a stew. Be inventive!

4 TRY AN ORGANIC VEG BOX Organic vegetable box schemes have prices that compete really well with organic supermarket produce, plus the boxes get delivered right to your door.

5 BUY IN BULK Save money and buy in bulk with friends and family from a wholesaler. By clubbing together, you can stock up on organic staples at wholesale prices.

BURGER CHAIN GETS THE VEGAN STAMP OF APPROVAL

The Handmade Burger Co. restaurant chain has recently registered 17 menu items with the Vegan Society trademark, offering customers assurance that these items are free of all animal products.

Vegan Trademark menu items include the Cajun Vegetable & Bean Burger, the Spinach & Lentil Burger, the Chickpea & Quinoa Burger, the Sweet Potato & Bean Burger and the Junior Falafel Burger, all available at the company's 23 restaurants nationwide, in addition to a range of vegan side dishes, salads, dressings and beverages.

Jasmijn de Boo, CEO of the Vegan Society, says: 'We are absolutely delighted that such a popular and ambitious restaurant chain has registered so many of its products with our vegan trademark. It is yet another sign of the ever-increasing demand for vegan options in high street restaurants, and a great example of veganism becoming further rooted in



mainstream culture for the benefit of animals, our health, the environment, and also for the future of our food.' Log on to find your nearest restaurant at www.handmadeburger.co.uk.

The Vegan Society has also launched a new search facility on its website, enabling people to find trademarked products and companies registered with the Vegan Society. Go to www.vegansociety.com/search and discover over 18,000 products registered worldwide.

Very friendly yogurt

During Organic September, organic Somerset-based dairy producer Yeo Valley will be changing the packaging on four of its top-selling ranges, as a way to thank its fans and customers for supporting British Family Farms every time they buy a British organic dairy product. The team at Yeo Valley say that if every home in the country bought just one more pot of British yogurt a week that would keep an extra 736 family farms like theirs going strong!

Yeo Valley Natural Yogurt, 500g, £1.50 from all major retailers, selected farm shops and independent stores. Check out recipes ideas at www.yeovalley.co.uk.

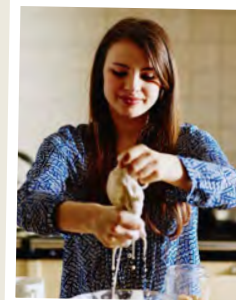


MY VEGGIE LIFE

Saskia Gregson-Williams

Tell us about your life...

I'm a ballet dancer, blogger and foodie based in London. I've just released my first cookbook, *Naturally Sassy*, which is my main project at the moment.



How long have you been vegan?

About three years now!

What prompted your decision?

I had chronic eczema amongst other health problems, and I wanted to see if a holistic approach would help. I cut out all inflammatory and acidic foods and felt incredible.

What's your favourite go-to supper dish?

The hummus and black bean quesadillas from my cookbook – so yum!

Name one thing you couldn't live without in the kitchen...

My blender – I love being able to make fresh smoothies, soups, ice cream and desserts in one machine.

Your favourite veggie blog or website?

My sister has a brilliant health website at www.hipandhealthy.com.

Being meat-free makes you feel...

Energised, enthused, positive!

● Turn to page 86 to discover Saskia's delicious vegan recipes from her new cookbook, *Naturally Sassy*.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

5 September

VIVA!'S INCREDIBLE VEGAN ROADSHOW

If you've thought about going vegan, here's your chance to have a taste of the vegan life. The roadshow at Portsmouth Guildhall will offer visitors delicious foods, one-to-one nutritional advice, free recipes and factsheets, cooking demos and talks, plus opportunities to buy lots of other vegan goodies from chocolate to cruelty-free cosmetics. Free admission.

www.viva.org.uk/portsmouth

18–20 September

ABERGAVENNY FOOD FESTIVAL

This quiet Welsh town explodes into life with the award-winning annual food festival, with guest chefs including Yotam Ottolenghi and Ramael Scully, Darina Allen, Theo Randall, Tom Kerridge and the Hemsley sisters. Discover over 200 food and drink producers, expert demos, wine tasting, foraging, distillery tours, children's events and music, plus food and fireworks at the castle.

www.abergavennyfoodfestival.com

26 September

THAME FOOD FESTIVAL

This Oxfordshire festival offers a wealth of good food and drink, live music and a stellar line-up of chefs including Raymond Blanc, Sophie Grigson and Richard Bertinet, plus you can also enter your best creations into the Big Thame Bake and see a *Great British Bake Off* group interview with 2013 winner Frances Quinn and other contestants from the show.

www.thamefoodfestival.co.uk





CRAZY ABOUT COCONUT

Founder of Gococo, Tracey Hogarth says the flavour and nutritional properties of coconut make it perfect for healthy drinks, snacks and shakes.

Inspired by a holiday in Florida, where coconut water was proving to be a big hit with health-conscious consumers, Tracey Hogarth and business partner Ross Currie launched Gococo in 2011 to introduce coconut water to the UK. The company's success and the growing coconut trend led to the development of other products, including Nudie Snacks, a range of toasted natural coconut chips.

'We are all about coconuts at Gococo and we wanted to develop a range that was healthy, innovative and on trend,' says Tracey. 'Coconut chips are a healthy alternative to potato crisps as they are high in fibre, low in carbs and low in sugar. More people are looking for healthier snacking ideas and there is nothing like it in the UK at the moment.'

Perfect for health-conscious nibblers, vegans and anyone following a gluten-free diet, Nudie Snacks started as lightly toasted coconut chips seasoned with a little sea salt, but the range has now expanded to include a salt and vinegar variety and sweet chilli flavour too.

'We've received a Great Taste award for our coconut chips, which was really good as it gave us confidence that food professionals think we are on the right track,' says Tracey. But the entrepreneurial pair has also been nominated for other awards. 'Ross and I were shortlisted for the finals of Scotland Food and Drink Entrepreneurs 2015, which was a great achievement.'

While the quirky Nudie Snacks name attracts attention, Tracey says the biggest challenge has been encouraging people to give the product a try – they don't always know what to expect. 'That's why we try to go to consumer food shows as this is the best way for people to try our product and that's

where we get all of our feedback, straight from the people who are likely to purchase.'

Tracey and Ross are constantly developing their business and coming up with new ideas, and have recently launched low-sugar, dairy-free Gococo milkshakes in chocolate fudge, strawberry and cream, and banana split flavours. 'Food innovation and exploring new trends is what we love about what we do,' says Tracey. 'There's nothing more satisfying than being in a retail store and your product is on the shelf and you see a shopper pick it up and put it in their basket.'

● Find out more at www.gococodrinks.com. The products are available at independent health food shops and delis, Whole Foods Market, Planet Organic and Ocado. Buy online at www.nudiesnacks.co.uk and follow on Twitter and Facebook for new product updates.

TASTE TEST...

3 super snacks

Looking for something more nutritious than a chocolate bar and more exciting than an apple? We think these new snacks are perfect for an afternoon pick-me-up or post-workout refuelling.



1 Bounce balls

Try an energy-packed ball containing a blend of nuts, seeds and brown rice for a protein-dense, gluten-free snack. Try the nutty, chewy Coconut & Macadamia Protein Bliss Ball (veggie) and the Cashew & Pecan Vitality Lift (vegan).

● Available from Tesco Nutri Centres or in the free-from aisle, £2 per ball.

2 Beond Organic Snack Bars

These handy little bars are not only organic, they're vegan, raw and soya- and gluten-free. Made from ingredients such as raw cashews, raw dates, date syrup and raw fruit, flavours include Acai Berry, Apple & Cinnamon, and Blueberry – we also loved the new Sour Cherry variety.

● Buy multipacks starting from £8.46 for a pack of nine 35g bars, from www.pulsin.co.uk.

3 Munchy Seeds

If you're more of a savoury snacker, ditch the crisps and go for Munchy Seeds instead. The spicy Chilli Bites and Omega Sprinkles are a tasty nibble, or can be sprinkled on salads or stir-fries.

● From 69p at Sainsbury's nationwide. The Munchy Seed range is also stocked by Ocado, Waitrose, Tesco and the Co-op.

In our trolley

THE VEG LIVING TEAM'S FAVOURITE NEW PRODUCTS...



STREET FOOD SUPPER

Looking for something quick and convenient? The new BOL pots put the world in a bowl, full of fresh, natural ingredients with recipes inspired by street food. With a choice of Veg, Noodle and Super BOLs, these handy pots pack a flavour punch with a great choice of global cuisines, and are ready to eat in a few microwave minutes. The BOL range is entirely vegetarian with some vegan options too. We particularly loved the Mexican Sweet Potato Chilli (vegan) and the Provençal Grilled Vegetables.

BOL are available at Sainsbury's, Tesco and Ocado, from £3.29.

Wibble wobble!

With many jelly products unsuitable for vegetarians, we were excited to discover these beautiful new fruity jellies at Waitrose. Bursting with berry flavour, the individual Raspberry Jelly and Cherry Jelly desserts (both £1.20) are packed full of fruit surrounded by soft silky jelly. If you're looking for something for all the family to enjoy, the Waitrose Raspberry Jelly Terrine (£2.49) is a sliceable dessert packed full of whole raspberries. Just add ice cream!



Delightful drizzling

We're already fans of Choc Shots, the liquid chocolate sauces sweetened with Sweet Freedom, an award-winning natural syrup made from 100 per cent fruit. Perfect for making hot chocolate or as a healthier topping on porridge, pancakes, toast, yogurt and desserts, Choc Shots carry the Vegan Society trademark, and are also free from GM, gluten, soya and refined sugar, plus they have just 14 calories per teaspoon and are 95 per cent fat free. Now, inspired by customer demand, look out for two delicious new flavours, Orange Spice (with cardamom) and Coconut.

£3.50 from all major supermarkets, Holland and Barrett, Whole Foods Market and health food stores. Choc Shot Orange Spice is available in Tesco and Choc Shot Coconut in Holland & Barrett.



● Kitchen utensils design linen tea towel by Pop Chart Lab (£11), from www.amara.com.



Sleek style

GET THE MONOCHROME LOOK IN YOUR COOKING SPACE WITH THESE ELEGANT BLACK AND WHITE ACCESSORIES.

● Scandinavian-designed Nuançe water jug in matte black (£82), from www.inthehaus.co.uk or independent kitchen shops

● Black and white cheeseboard (£12), from www.tescodirect.com (in store from 1 September)



PERFECT PAIRINGS

This month, we suggest some delicious vegetarian wines to pair with the rich flavours of red peppers, tomato, beetroot and spices in Rachel Demuth's seasonal recipes on page 22.

Il Conte Provincia di Pavia IGT Pinot Grigio £9.99, Ocado

A delightful Pinot Grigio from Northern Italy and a cut above the normal Pinot, with a little more weight and crisp fresh flavours to help complement the red pepper soup. Don't serve too cold.



Tesco Côtes de Gascogne Blanc 2014 £4.49, Tesco

Plaimont's fresh Gascony white is packed with fresh grapefruit flavour from a blend of traditional grape varieties and is wonderfully refreshing to drink.



Tiger Horse Old Vine Cinsault £6.99, Ocado

Tomatoes can be tricky as they are acidic, so you need some balancing acidity, but low tannin. This South African Cinsault grape variety has a touch of sweetness and a hint of strawberry fruit to complement the herbs and garlic.



La Piuma Orvieto £7.49, Waitrose

This Italian white has delicate flavours of apple and peach, with a hint of almonds on the finish. A refreshing partner for garlicky stuffed tomatoes.



Yalumba Organic Viognier £9.99, Ocado

With the spices in the muhammara, a fuller-bodied white with tropical touches offers a cooling balance. The fresh lime, melon and grapefruit flavours make this a perfect pairing.



Les Nivières Saumur £8.99, Waitrose

This Waitrose exclusive from the banks of the Loire is a berry-fruit laden, medium-bodied wine to go with the robust flavours of beetroot and cumin.



FUTURE-PROOF LEGO

Colourful, robust and offering endless play potential, most children born since the 1950s have played with Lego at some point. Now the makers of these iconic bricks have announced they are investing 1 billion DKK into finding sustainable alternatives to the current materials. With over 60 billion Lego elements manufactured in 2014 alone, the company hopes the investment will considerably reduce its environmental impact along with recent initiatives designed to meet ambitious sustainability targets by 2030, including reducing packaging size, introducing FSC-certified packaging and investment in an offshore wind farm.



This latest project will see the establishment of a new research centre at the company HQ in Denmark, where a range of experts will identify materials for making plastic that are not fossil- or oil-based, and test potential solutions that are bio-based, renewable or even recycled.

But replicating the unrivalled design, quality, safety and play experience of Lego bricks with new materials is a considerable challenge, and in the meantime, the best way customers can make this timeless toy more eco-friendly is to pass on their sets to other families and ensure no Lego brick ends up in landfill.

www.lego.com

GET SHWOPPING!

Since 2012, clothing donations to @shwopping have raised an estimated £6.8 million for Oxfam. But in the UK we still throw away almost a million tons of textiles every year. Now the charity Hubbub is encouraging people to set up a shwopping event at their workplace – simply register online to get a kit, which includes a ‘Schwop Drop’ box for your colleagues to donate their unwanted clothes, and posters to raise awareness of the campaign. As a thank you, each person who donates clothes will receive



a Marks & Spencer voucher for £5 off clothing, home and gifts at the store (minimum spend £35).

To find out more and set up your own event, go to www.hubbub.org.uk/shwop-at-work; contact shwopatwork@hubbub.org.uk or call 020 3701 7542.

BOTANIC BEAUTY

The perfect hand soap for cooks, the Greenfrog Botanic range is particularly effective at eliminating that persistent smell of garlic from your hands.

Based on organic soapberries, the Greenfrog Botanic bodywash and handwash products are the first in the UK to use this natural botanical soap, and they also contain organic aloe vera to moisturise and nourish the skin. Available in two essential oil-based fragrances – calming peppermint and geranium, and uplifting lime and neroli – these biodegradable products are accredited by the Vegan and Vegetarian Societies and are good for you and the planet, containing no parabens, sulphates, detergents or palm oil.

Available from independent health food retailers, or order direct online at www.greenfrogbotanic.co.uk.



Karin Ridgers,
passionate vegan
presenter and founder
of VeggieVision TV,
reveals what she's
loving this month...



My new favourite thing

I have fallen in love with the Spa Technologies range, which is vegan, organic and made from seaweed! I had no idea how good seaweed is for our skin until I used the products, and I am really impressed with the results.



The seaweeds are sustainably ‘wild-crafted’ using only healthy plants to ensure nutritional integrity. The seaweed is then processed under cold pressure to retain nutrients and no chemicals are used.

Spa Technologies is brand new to the UK and there's even some celebrity buzz about the range. Presenter, author and homes expert Anthea Turner says: ‘The perfect summertime skin-care option, I love the light feel of Spa Technologies’ skin-care range. The Vitamin C Moisturising Serum is a favourite and because it's vegan-friendly and organic, it ticks all the right ethical skin-care boxes for me. Go try!’ www.veganbeautyskincare.co.uk

● For cookery, celebrities and news, visit www.veggievision.tv.



... these Biobu eco-friendly trays from Ekobo, which are made from natural bamboo with no petroleum-based materials, and come in six bright colours. These versatile trays will make healthy after-school snacks more fun, and are also ideal for kids who prefer their mealtime veggies to be segregated! £10 each from www.thekidwho.eu.

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- ▶ Due to high content of fibre & protein not suitable for frying
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- ▶ 100% Pure, suitable for vegetarians & vegans

Raw Extra Virgin Coconut Oil

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- ▶ Highest stability coconut oil for all cooking & baking
- ▶ Use as a skin moisturiser and hair conditioner
- ▶ 100% Pure, suitable for vegetarians & vegans

From Holland & Barrett, all Good Independent Health Stores or online at www.tiana-coconut.com

Delicious in September

Combining the best of the late summer bounty with the first fruits of the early autumn harvest, September provides a rich variety of ingredients, from plump ears of corn to soft, sun-ripened figs and ruby raspberries. Many of the finest fresh fruits and vegetables of the season need little or no effort in the kitchen, simply pick, eat and enjoy...

TURN THE PAGE
TO MAKE A QUICK FIG
SALAD, OR DISCOVER
RICK STEIN'S
BEAUTIFUL FIG TART
ON PAGE 29.

WE LOVE... FIGS

These exotic-looking Mediterranean treats are at their peak in September and October, so take full advantage of the short season. Figs don't ripen after picking, so choose richly coloured, plump, soft fruits with unbroken skins. A light fuzzy bloom on the skin often signals they've reached their peak of ripeness, so use them quickly. Figs pair well with soft cheeses, yogurt, spices and nuts for deliciously simple sweet and savoury dishes.

Simple dessert Cut a deep cross into the top of each fig (leaving them joined at the base), press open the quarters and drizzle the flesh with a little honey. Sprinkle with cinnamon, then roast in the oven until soft and caramelised. Serve with a few pistachios and a dollop of mascarpone, crème fraiche or ice cream.

Breakfast crunch Follow the instructions above but serve with natural Greek yogurt and a handful of your favourite granola or toasted nuts and seeds.

Savoury bite Brush slices of good quality bread (try sourdough or ciabatta) with olive oil and toast in a griddle pan. Top the toasted crostini with ricotta cheese, a drizzle of honey and thinly sliced fresh figs, then scatter with basil leaves and a few toasted pine nuts. This also works with soft goat's cheese.



Autumn fig salad

This simple salad showcases the natural sweet flavour and beauty of these Mediterranean favourites.

Serves 4 | Prep 10 mins

50g walnut halves
1 tbsp red wine vinegar
3 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp clear honey
250g white chicory
140g red chicory
4 figs, cut into quarters
50g vegetarian Gorgonzola piccante-style cheese, crumbled

1 Break any of the larger pieces of walnuts in half. Heat a frying pan over a medium heat and add the walnuts. Stir continuously for 1–2 minutes, until warm, watching closely as they are easy to burn. Leave to cool.

2 Make the dressing by whisking together the red wine vinegar, olive oil and honey in a bowl.

3 Slice each head of chicory lengthways, then trim the base to separate the remaining leaves. Place in a large salad bowl and toss through with the dressing.


4 Spoon the chicory on to a large platter or plate, then place the fig quarters on top. Finish by topping with the walnuts and Gorgonzola-style cheese.

COOK'S TIP Try swapping the Gorgonzola for a creamy Manchego or crumbly Greek feta.

■ PER SERVING 356 cal, fat 22g, sat fat 4.5g, carbs 33.5g, sugars 31.5g, protein 6.5g, salt 0.5g, fibre 6g

Adapted recipe from www.waitrose.com. Find more inspiring ideas at www.waitrose.com/recipes.

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 Vegan syrup, like maple, agave or Sweet Freedom, will sweeten the dressing in place of the honey. There is such a wide range of vegan cheese to choose from, but No-Moo Classic (Blue) would work particularly well.

Your September larder

FRUIT Apples, blackberries, damsons, elderberries, figs, grapes, medlar, melon, nectarines and peaches, pears, plums, raspberries and redcurrants

VEGETABLES Artichoke, aubergine, beetroot, broccoli, butternut squash, carrots, celeriac, chicory, chillies, courgettes, fennel, French beans, garlic, horseradish, kale, kohlrabi, leeks, mange tout, marrow, onions, pak choi, peppers, potatoes, pumpkin, runner beans, shallots, sweetcorn, turnips and wild mushrooms

SALADS Celery, cucumber, lettuce and salad leaves, radishes, rocket, spring onions, tomatoes, watercress

GO FORAGING DAMSONS

From woodland to allotments, back gardens and wasteground, damsons are found wild all over the place in September – you just have to know where to look. With a very tart flavour when raw, these purple fruits come into their own when cooked and sweetened, and work beautifully in crumbles, cobblers, ice cream, sorbet and jam – in fact, most recipes that call for plums would work equally well with damsons (but you may need to adjust the level of sugar or other sweetener).

For a special grown-up treat, concoct your own homemade damson vodka. Sarah Raven offers a simple recipe for damson vodka or gin at



www.sarahraven.com/articles/sloe_gin_recipe_or_damson_vodka.htm

Make it now, and leave to mature until Christmas 2017 to enjoy at its best – if you can wait that long!



Quick and crunchy Asian noodle salad

This tasty salad packs a real crunch thanks to the celery, radishes, spring onions and Chinese leaf lettuce. Make it up the night before for a quick, easy and delicious lunch on the go.

Serves 1 | Prep 10 mins

For the dressing:

- 1 tbsp peanut butter
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- 2 tsp sesame oil
- ½ tsp chilli flakes
- 1 tsp rice wine vinegar

For the salad:

- large handful of frozen soya beans
- 100g fresh egg or udon noodles
- 1 stick of celery, sliced
- 4 radishes, sliced into wedges
- 1 spring onion, sliced
- 3 leaves of Chinese leaf lettuce, finely shredded

- 1 In a bowl, whisk all the dressing ingredients together with a splash of water until smooth. Pour into the bottom of a large preserving jar.
- 2 Defrost the soya beans in boiling water then drain.
- 3 Layer the noodles on top of the dressing. Add the celery and radish, then the soya beans, and top with the crunchy spring onion and Chinese leaf lettuce.
- 4 To serve, tip everything into a bowl and give a good stir.

COOK'S TIP The key to jar salads is the order in which the ingredients are put into the jar. Pour the dressing in first, then layer firmer vegetables at the bottom, the protein in the middle and the leafy greens at the top so they don't get soggy.

■ PER SERVING 335 cals, fat 18g, sat fat 3.5g, carbs 26.5g, sugars 6g, protein 13.5g, salt 1.7g, fibre 9g

govegan

V Opt for udon (or rice) noodles. Packets of dry noodles over the 'straight to wok' varieties tend to be safer.

Adapted recipe from www.lovethecrunch.co.uk.

EASY
LUNCH
TO GO

Top of the crop

Sweetcorn

These bright yellow kernels in their papery pale green husks are a seasonal treat, and the sweet, juicy, satisfying crunch when you bite into a fresh cob just knocks the socks off the tinned and frozen varieties.

A beautifully fresh corn on the cob needs little adornment – simply soak in water for 10–15 minutes, grill or barbecue until tender and slightly charred, then top with butter and seasoning. Try mashing butter with lime zest and finely chopped red chilli for a little kick.

Cut from the cob, fresh sweetcorn is also delicious in stir-fries and salads, while kids will love sweetcorn fritters made with a simple batter, served with a sweet chilli sauce for dipping.

Sweetcorn salsa is a great side dish – mix char-grilled corn cut from the cob with chopped peppers, avocado, feta, tomato and red onion (or spring onion), with lime juice and plenty of chopped coriander.



Sweetcorn and coconut mini cakes with corn cob jelly

Makes 10 cakes

Prep 35 mins + cooling

Cook 1 hr 5 mins

For the corn cob jelly:

4 ears of corn

1 tbsp pectin

145g sugar

For the cake:

450g cooked corn kernels (removed from the cobs used to make the jelly)

170g, unsalted butter, softened

200g sugar

3 free-range eggs

150g plain Greek yogurt

240ml coconut milk

1 tsp vanilla extract

450g plain flour

4 tsp baking powder

½ tsp salt

75g shredded coconut

This recipe is from **Kate Hackworthy**. Turn to **page 72** to read our interview with Kate and try more of her vegetable cake recipes.

To finish:

coconut cream, chilled and whipped
shaved coconut (optional)

1 First, make the corn cob jelly. Remove the husks and silks and boil the corn on the cobs in enough water to just cover for 5 minutes.

Reserving the cooking water, remove the cobs and run under cold water to cool. Remove the corn kernels from the cobs with a sharp knife and set aside for the cake.

2 Return the cobs to the pan of water and boil for 30 minutes. Remove the cobs and strain 1 cup of the cooking water through muslin into a small saucepan and discard the rest. Add the pectin and bring to the boil. Add the sugar and boil for 5 minutes. Pour into a sterilised jar and allow to cool, then refrigerate.

3 Preheat the oven to 160C/fan 140C/gas 3. Grease two 20cm square cake tins.

4 Purée the cooked corn kernels with a hand held blender until smooth. Set aside.

5 Cream the butter and sugar together with an electric mixer for a few minutes, until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, and beat in well. Stir in the corn purée, yogurt, coconut milk and vanilla extract.

6 In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt and coconut. Make a well in the centre and pour in the wet ingredients. Mix gently until just combined.

7 Pour the batter into the prepared tins and bake for 30 minutes, or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes in the tin, then turn out on to a wire rack to cool completely.

8 To make the individual mini cakes, cut the



cooled cake into rounds with a cookie cutter. Spread corn jelly and whipped coconut cream between layers of cut cake and decorate with shaved coconut.

■ PER CAKE 698 cals, fat 35g, sat fat 24g, carbs 86.5g, sugars 44g, protein 12g, salt 1.5g, fibre 4g

Adapted recipe from Kate Hackworthy at www.veggiedesserts.co.uk.



Season's eatings

GROWING TALES

Ross Geach, Padstow Kitchen Garden

'I became a chef when I left school. It wasn't my dream, it's just that when you grow up in Padstow you either work in a restaurant, become a fisherman or go into farming!' laughs Ross Geach. 'But it wasn't long before I started to absolutely love it.'

Ross was lucky enough to land his first proper job working for Rick Stein, first at St Petroc's Bistro and then at his main restaurant. 'Rick and Jill are inspiring to work for. They've built an amazing empire of restaurants and Rick's food isn't complicated, it's all about using the best quality ingredients, sourced from as many local suppliers as possible, and then not playing around with them too much. He just makes really ace food that's fun to cook.'

Every day, local suppliers would call in at the restaurant to deliver their fresh produce, and Ross became increasingly interested in where his ingredients were coming from. 'About eight years ago, I started doing a bit of veg growing with my granddad out on Trerethern Farm, which has been in our family for six generations,' says Ross. 'He couldn't believe it because I was growing beetroot and pulling them up when they were smaller than a golf ball, and he was like "What're you doing boy?" because he didn't think they were ready yet! He's traditional and thought the veg should be left to grow as big as possible, but with my cheffing background I knew that's not what the

restaurants want. So he taught me the basics of growing and I put my chef's spin on it.'

Today, Ross works full time on the farm, growing and delivering his fresh produce from the two-acre Padstow Kitchen Garden to top chefs such as executive head chef Jack Stein at the Rick Stein restaurant and Paul Ainsworth at Number 6 restaurant, as well as to St Petroc's Bistro in Padstow and Jamie Oliver's Fifteen Cornwall at Watergate Bay. But he admits it's been a steep learning curve.

'At first I was putting in two rows of salad and thinking it was loads. I watched it grow and I was chuffed to bits, but then I took it in to the head chef at a restaurant in town and he says he wants the same again tomorrow - but he's had my entire harvest in one day! Chefs like consistency in their supply, so now I concentrate on continuity growing.'

His other challenge is keeping up with new vegetable trends. 'Sometimes you get the new veg on the block and you have to meet the demand,' he says. 'I grew loads of flower sprouts last year and all it takes is Tom Kerridge or someone like that to use it on TV and then my phone doesn't stop ringing.' But Ross predicts that Padrón peppers are going to be the next big thing. 'They've been around for years, but I predicted they'd be a big new trend so I've got 350 Padrón pepper plants in my polytunnels right now, so I'm feeling quite smug!' he laughs.

His only regret about leaving the hustle

of kitchen life was not having a team to train and inspire, so he's launched a new programme of hands-on gardening workshops, where small groups can come along to learn new skills. It's also a great opportunity to enjoy a freshly harvested lunch on the farm, prepared by Rick Stein's former head chef, all with the lovely backdrop of the river beyond the shed.

And with a view from the office like that, it's hardly surprising Ross never went back to his day job.

● Find out more at www.padstowkitchengarden.co.uk. For dates and details of Ross's gardening courses, email ross@padstowkitchengarden.co.uk.

What's growing at the Padstow Kitchen Garden in September?

- Salad leaves ● Baby leeks ● Spinach
- Baby fennel ● Courgette flowers ●
- Dragon's egg cucumbers
- Tomatoes ● Padrón peppers ●
- Edible flowers: cornflower, borage, nasturtiums and viola

When you grow up in Padstow you either work in a restaurant, become a fisherman or go into farming!

Berry delightful

Great British Bake Off finalist Luis Troyano has created this beautiful raspberry tart, the perfect dessert to impress for a gathering.

MAKE IT SEASONAL

Look out for a fresh crop of the finest Scottish raspberries that are ripe and ready to eat in September. This pretty tart is topped with fresh pomegranate seeds, but when pomegranates are out of season, simply add extra fresh raspberries and some grated white chocolate.

Raspberry, pistachio and white chocolate tart

Serves 12

Prep 35 mins

Cook 58 mins

For the sweet shortcrust pastry:

215g plain flour

30g icing sugar

120g cold unsalted butter, cut into 1cm cubes

2 medium free-range egg yolks

2 tbsp fridge-cold water

For the filling:

100g good quality white chocolate, coarsely chopped

200ml double cream

300g mascarpone cheese

1½ tsp vanilla paste, or 2 tsp vanilla extract

3 medium free-range eggs

250g fresh raspberries

½ fresh pomegranate

100g pistachios, coarsely chopped (or use slivered pistachios, which look amazing)

1 To make the pastry, place all the dry ingredients in the bowl of your food processor and give them a quick pulse. Add the butter and pulse again until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs.

2 Tip the mixture into a large mixing bowl and add the egg and water. Bring together with your hands and then gently knead the mixture to make a smooth pastry. Wrap in cling film and place in the fridge.

3 Preheat the oven to 210C/fan 190C/gas 6½. Grease and line the bottom of a 26cm loose-bottomed tart tin.



4 Roll out the pastry to a thickness of 3mm. Place your tin on the pastry and cut around it, about 6cm larger than the tin. Do not trim off the overhanging pastry. Prick the base all over with a fork. Place 4 sheets of cling film loosely over the tart tin, and press them down together into the pastry. Fill the tin with rice or mung beans and bake for 20 minutes.

5 Remove from the oven and leave to cool for 5 minutes. Lift out the cling film with the rice or beans. Put the pastry back in the oven and bake for 8 minutes. Remove from the oven and leave to cool for 20 minutes. Trim off the excess pastry. Reduce the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4.

6 Put the white chocolate in a heatproof bowl with the double cream and place over a saucepan of simmering water. Make sure the water doesn't touch the bottom of the bowl. Stir until the chocolate has melted.

7 Leave to cool for a couple of minutes, then add the mascarpone, vanilla and eggs, and whisk very lightly until combined. Try not to get air into the mixture.

8 Pour two-thirds of the mixture into the pastry case and then add the raspberries,

distributing them evenly. Add the rest of the mixture until you get to within 3mm of the top. Make sure all the raspberries are submerged.

9 Place the tart tin on a baking sheet and bake for 25–30 minutes, until the filling feels firm in the centre and you start to see a little cracking around the edges. Place on a wire rack and leave to cool completely before removing the tart from the tin.

10 Using a wooden spoon, hit the back of the halved pomegranate over a bowl to knock the seeds out. Sprinkle the pistachios and pomegranate seeds over the tart.

■ PER SERVING 443 cals, fat 36g, sat fat 20.5g, carbs 24g, sugars 10g, protein 7g, salt 0.5g, fibre 2g



Adapted from *Bake it Great* by Luis Troyano (Pavilion, £25). Photography by Clare Winfield.

Soyabella Milk Maker

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- ◆ Nut milks in 30 seconds
- ◆ Soya milk in 15 minutes
- ◆ Oat, rice and coconut milk in minutes



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ALSO...

Don't miss **Amanda Hamilton's** nutrition talk on Sunday @ 12pm - '5 Minutes a day to change your life' - How to live raw and real with DIY superfood juices, bars and milks that take minutes!



Red alert

Every month, professional chef and cookery school tutor Rachel Demuth shares the best of her seasonal larder. This issue she prepares three simple yet show-stopping recipes that make a big impact with the bold colours and flavours of beetroot, red pepper and tomatoes.

At Demuths Cookery School, seasonality is the most important factor in choosing what to cook and which recipes to make on our courses. In late summer we are spoilt for choice as there is a bounty, often referred to as a glut, of locally grown vegetables to choose from.

This is the perfect time of year to make three of my best-loved recipes, all of which are stunningly colourful and perfect for late-summer suppers on balmy evenings.

PEPPERS

When red peppers are ripe, plentiful and cheap, my red pepper soup is the ideal dish to showcase the deep flavour and richness of this versatile vegetable, and it's equally delicious served hot or cold, depending on the occasion or the weather. Peppers are available in a rainbow of colours, which vary depending on variety and ripeness. Green peppers can be quite bitter and tangy and for this reason I don't roast them. Yellow and orange peppers can be roasted, but if you are looking for a dramatic colour in your finished dish, red peppers are my top choice. When roasted, they are deliciously sweet.

BEETROOT

A dish traditionally made with roasted red pepper is muhammara, but I like to make it with beetroot for its vibrant purple colour and robust flavour. Try to buy fresh beetroot with the leaves still attached: the leaves are edible and very tasty. Baby leaves can be eaten raw in salad and larger ones cooked like spinach.

You can buy beetroot all year round, but a fresh new crop of beetroot is becoming available now. Young, fresh beetroot is delicious grated raw into salads, thinly sliced with a mandolin for ceviche, made into borsch or roasted with cumin and pomegranate syrup.

Beetroot should not be peeled before cooking, because the colour will leach out. You can either roast them or boil them, and although it takes longer, I prefer to roast beetroot as this concentrates the natural sugars. To roast, simply wrap unpeeled beetroot in foil and pop in the oven for 1-2 hours, depending on their size, until they feel slightly soft. Leave to cool and then peel. If you prefer the quicker method of boiling, cook them whole in plenty of water for about 45-60 minutes, until the skin begins to break away from the root and the skin wrinkles. Cool the beetroot under cold water and peel off the skin. Some people don't like preparing beetroot as the colour stains hands and clothes, but the flavour is worth the extra effort!

There are many different-coloured beetroot being grown in the UK now and it's worth trying them, especially the pink-and-white-striped Italian 'Chioggia' variety.

TOMATOES

I first made my recipe for stuffed tomatoes on our French cookery holiday and it is best made with large ripe but still firm tomatoes. The red rice comes from the Carmargue and is a wholegrain variety with a nutty bite to it.

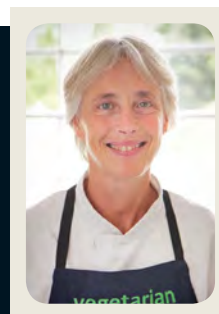
Although they are stars of the season at the moment, tomatoes are one of my most indispensable ingredients all year round. They are at their best in the summer, however, so now is the time to buy plenty and make them into passata (tomato sauce) which can be frozen, or make tomato chutney. When bought out of season, tomatoes tend to be tasteless, so in the colder months I use passata, tinned or dried tomatoes in my cooking, which have more flavour and natural sweetness as they were picked at peak ripeness.

These bright red fruits are not only delicious, they are something of a superfood too, containing vitamin C and lycopene, which has been linked to preventing cancer. But most of the goodness from tomatoes is in the seeds and juices, so do try to avoid deseeding if possible, to enjoy the full impact of the tomato's nutritional content and flavour!

ABOUT RACHEL

Chef-proprietor of the award-winning Demuths restaurant in Bath for 25 years, Rachel is now dedicated to running the Demuths Vegetarian Cookery School, which offers a range of themed workshops, guest chef events, cookery holidays in France and Italy, and the Demuths Vegetarian and Vegan Diplomas for professional chefs and keen cooks. As a well-travelled foodie, Rachel loves to combine her passion for global cuisine with the best of locally grown produce.

www.demuths.co.uk



Oven-roasted red pepper soup *

This vivid red soup is packed with sweet pepper flavour and looks stunning served with a swirl of yogurt.

Serves 4 | Prep 10 mins | Cook 55 mins

- 6 large red peppers, halved and deseeded
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 bulb garlic, cut in half through the middle
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 500ml vegetable stock
- ½ tsp chilli flakes
- lemon juice, to taste
- 1-2 tsp honey
- salt, to taste

To serve:
handful of parsley leaves, chopped
2 tbsp yogurt

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Rub the peppers with a little olive oil and place on a baking tray with the garlic. Roast for about 40 minutes, or until the peppers are wrinkly and blackened.

2 Place the cooked peppers in a bowl and cover with cling film to trap the heat and help release the skin. When cool, peel off the skins and chop.

3 Fry the onion and bay leaf gently in olive oil for 10 minutes, until the onion is soft and translucent. Add the ground cumin, the garlic squeezed from the roasted bulb and the pepper. Add the stock and bring to the boil. Simmer covered for 5 minutes.

4 Remove the bay leaf and blend the soup until smooth. Add the chilli flakes, lemon juice, honey and salt to taste.

5 To serve, sprinkle with generous amounts of parsley and top with a spoonful of yogurt.

■ PER SERVING 223 cal, fat 10g, sat fat 1.5g, carbs 26g, sugars 21.5g, protein 6g, salt 1.5g, fibre 6g

govegan

V Replace the honey with brown sugar for a touch of sweetness, and swap the dairy yogurt for a soya alternative.



HOW TO...

Roast and peel a pepper

Slice the pepper in half lengthways and take out the seeds and any white membrane. Place on an oiled baking tray and roast in a hot oven or under the grill until the skin has blackened. Then put the hot roasted peppers into a bowl, cover with cling film and leave to cool. When the peppers are cool, the skin will easily peel off, although you may need a small sharp knife to slice off any stuck skin.

STUFFED
TOMATOES
WITH RED RICE
AND HERBS

Stuffed tomatoes with red rice and herbs

These tomatoes are a real showstopper and look beautiful served with a green salad on the side. Use the best large tomatoes you can find. It is important that they are really ripe, but still firm enough to hold their shape when cooked.

Serves 6 | Prep 30 mins | Cook 1 hr

2 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
200g Carmargue red rice
750ml hot vegetable stock
125ml white wine
bouquet garni of bay, rosemary, thyme and oregano
6 ripe but firm large tomatoes

For the filling:

2 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
1 onion, finely sliced
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
350g finely chopped vegetables of your choice, such as red pepper, mushroom and leek
salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 tbsp tomato purée
3 tbsp chopped fresh basil
handful of flat-leaf parsley, chopped
100g vegetarian hard cheese (optional)

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Oil a large baking dish, big enough to fit the tomatoes snugly, with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil.
- 2 Cook the rice in a medium saucepan with the hot vegetable stock, wine and bouquet garni. Simmer for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until just cooked through. Make sure the rice isn't overcooked, as it will cook again inside the tomatoes. Drain and set aside.
- 3 Cut a thick slice off the top of each tomato, leaving the stalk on if you can, and reserve the tops. Scoop the seeds, pulp and juice from each tomato into a small saucepan. Simmer the tomato pulp for 15 minutes, then strain through a sieve. Discard the seeds. Place the hollowed tomatoes in the baking dish.
- 4 To make the filling, fry the onion gently in the 2 tablespoons of olive oil, until soft and starting to caramelise. Add the garlic and fry for a minute before adding the vegetables with a pinch of salt and pepper. Gently fry for 5 minutes, then add the tomato purée and cook for a couple of minutes.
- 5 Combine the filling with the rice, herbs and most of the cheese. Add the tomato juice to achieve a moist filling. Taste and season well.
- 6 Spoon the rice mixture into the hollowed tomatoes, mounding slightly. Sprinkle any leftover stuffing on the bottom of the pan.



BEETROOT MUHAMMARA

© ROB WICKS/EAT PICTURES

Drizzle the entire dish with olive oil and the remaining cheese, then place the reserved tomato 'hats' on top of the tomatoes. Bake for about 20 minutes, until the rice is heated through. Serve hot or at room temperature.

■ PER SERVING 371 cals, fat 20.5g, sat fat 6g, carbs 34.5g, sugars 6.5g, protein 9.5g, salt 1.8g, fibre 4.5g

govegan

Choose a hard vegan cheese alternative like VBites Hard Italian Style Cheezly.

Beetroot muhammara

Muhammara is a dip made from groundnuts and vegetables, often using roasted peppers and almonds. This version uses beetroot for a deep purple colour. For convenience, you can buy ready-cooked beetroot (not in vinegar) to speed up the recipe.

Serves 6 | Prep 30 mins | Cook 1 hr

2 medium uncooked beetroots, washed
30g breadcrumbs
1 tsp paprika
pinch of cayenne or chilli flakes
150ml hot water
1 clove garlic, crushed
200g cashews or walnuts, roasted
2 tbsp pomegranate syrup
1 tsp cumin seeds, dry-fried and ground
2 tbsp olive oil
salt, to taste

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Wrap the unpeeled beetroots in foil and roast in the oven for about 1 hour, depending

on their size, until they feel slightly soft. Allow the beetroots to cool and then peel.

- 2 Put the breadcrumbs into a bowl and sprinkle with the paprika and cayenne, then pour on the hot water. Leave for 5 minutes.
- 3 To make the muhammara, use a food processor, or a pestle and mortar which will produce a much rougher consistency. Chop then blend the cooked beetroot with the garlic. Chop then crush the roasted nuts. Mix together the beetroot, nuts and breadcrumbs. If you want a smoother consistency, continue blending the dip in the food processor.

- 4 Add the pomegranate syrup and ground cumin, taste and add salt plus more pomegranate syrup and spices to taste. Stir the olive oil in after blending. Eat with warm lavash or pitta bread.

■ PER SERVING 281 cals, fat 21g, sat fat 4g, carbs 15.5g, sugars 8.5g, protein 8g, salt 1.4g, fibre 2g

govegan

If serving with bread, check lavash ingredients, or opt for pitta to be on the safe side.

HOW TO...

Make breadcrumbs

An easy way to make breadcrumbs is to cut the bread into cubes and dry them out in a warm oven. Doing this allows you to whizz them up to a much finer consistency. Completely dried out breadcrumbs will keep in a sealed jar in the fridge, or you can freeze them.

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**Suma**



Rick Stein's MEDITERRANEAN DELIGHTS

From Venice to Istanbul, Rick has embarked on a new food odyssey this summer, exploring the lesser-known flavours of the Eastern Mediterranean in a new TV series. Here he shares some of the evocative dishes he discovered along the way...



FREEKEH SALAD

Freekeh salad

Freekeh is dried green wheat, harvested while the grains are still soft, then sun-dried. It is very common in the Middle East and North Africa, and is used in the same way as bulgur, couscous or pearly spelt. It works well as an accompanying pilaf or a salad, in this case with pomegranate seeds, pistachios, mint and spring onion.

**Serves 6 as a side dish | Prep 10 mins
Cook 15 mins**

- 200g freekeh, pearly spelt or pearly barley
- 1 litre water
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 5 tbsp olive oil
- 4 spring onions, finely chopped
- seeds of 1 pomegranate
- handful of flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped
- handful of mint, roughly chopped
- 1½ tbsp pomegranate molasses
- 2 tbsp pistachios, roughly crushed

- 1** Put the freekeh and water in a pan together with 1 teaspoon of salt and 1 tablespoon of the olive oil, bring to the boil, then turn down to a simmer and cook for 15 minutes until just tender. Drain and allow to cool.
- 2** When cool, mix together the freekeh with the spring onions, pomegranate seeds and herbs, and season with salt and pepper.
- 3** Whisk together the remaining 4 tablespoons of olive oil and the pomegranate molasses

with a pinch of salt, and dress the salad with it, mixing gently. Serve topped with pistachios.

■ PER SERVING 250 cal, fat 12g, sat fat 1.5g, carbs 31g, sugars 6g, protein 5.5g, salt 1.1g, fibre 3g

Three-milk cake

This is spectacularly good – the lightest of sponges saturated in three different types of milk: regular milk, evaporated milk and double cream. I have been at it again modifying things, however, and the topping that was a caramel is now salted caramel.

**Serves 16 | Prep 30 mins
Cook 30 mins**

For the cake:

vegetable oil, for greasing
6 large free-range eggs, separated
300g caster sugar
400g plain flour, sifted
with 2 tsp baking powder
2 tsp vanilla extract

For the three-milk soak:

1 litre full-fat milk
400ml evaporated milk
400ml double cream

For the salted caramel sauce:

450g granulated sugar
120ml water
3g cornflour, slaked with 3 tbsp water
240g butter, cubed
½ tsp sea salt flakes

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Line a shallow roasting tin, about 30cm x 40cm, with baking parchment and grease the sides.

2 For the cake, beat the egg whites with an electric whisk until starting to hold their shape, then add the sugar a third at a time, whisking until you have a glossy white mass. Add the egg yolks, one at a time, whisking after each addition. Add the sifted flour and baking powder and fold in well with a large spoon or spatula. Stir in the vanilla extract. Spoon into the prepared tin and smooth the top.

3 Bake for 30 minutes until lightly coloured on top and spongy to the touch, slightly shrinking back from the sides of the tin. Turn out on to a wire rack to cool, then peel off the parchment.

4 Mix the three milks together and pour half into the roasting tin. Return the sponge to the tin, making holes with a fork all over the top, then pour over the remaining milk mixture. Allow the cake to soak up the milk.

5 Make the caramel by heating the sugar in a heavy-based pan until it melts and starts to brown. Swirl the pan a little and keep an eye on it while it turns to a deep brown caramel colour. When ready, remove from the heat and add the water.

6 Stand back as it will spit alarmingly. Swirl in the pan and return to the heat. Add the slaked cornflour and the butter, and stir until thick enough to coat the sponge. Add a little more water if it seems too thick. Stir in the sea salt flakes, then spread over the cake and leave to cool. Cut into squares to serve.

■ PER SERVING 613 cal, fat 32g, sat fat 19.5g, carbs 75g, sugars 55.5g, protein 9.5g, salt 0.9g, fibre 1.5g

**Serves 8 | Prep 20 mins + chilling
Cook 43 mins**

For the pastry:

170g plain flour, sifted, plus extra for dusting
pinch of salt
100g unsalted butter, cubed
50g caster sugar
1 free-range egg yolk
50ml double cream

For the filling:

500g mascarpone cheese
6 tbsp clear honey
6 large, 7 medium or 8 small fresh figs, stems trimmed, halved

1 For the pastry, mix the flour, salt and butter until it resembles breadcrumbs, then stir in the sugar. Mix the egg yolk and cream, and add to the flour mixture so that it comes together to form a dough. On a floured surface, roll out the pastry and use it to line a 26cm, loose-bottomed flan tin. (If too difficult to handle, wrap and chill for 30 minutes in the fridge.)

2 Trim the edges of the pastry, cover with cling film and rest it in the freezer for 30 minutes.

3 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Line the pastry with baking parchment, fill with baking beans or rice and bake blind for 10 minutes. Remove the paper and beans and cook for a further 3 minutes. Take out of the oven and lower the temperature to 160C/fan 140C/gas 3.

4 Soften the mascarpone with the honey in a small saucepan over a low heat. Pour into the pastry case, then lay the figs on top, cut-side up. Bake for 30 minutes until just starting to turn golden around the edges.

5 To serve, allow to cool to room temperature before removing from the tin and cutting.

■ PER SERVING 661 cal, fat 44.5g, sat fat 44.5g, carbs 60g, sugars 43g, protein 6.5g, salt 1g, fibre 5g



Dalmatian fresh fig tart

This is exactly my kind of pudding, so easy to knock up when the fig season comes around. One of the pleasures for me of living on both sides of the world is that I get two fig seasons!



Recipes adapted from *Rick Stein: From Venice to Istanbul* by Rick Stein (BBC Books, £25). Photography by James Murphy.

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PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL DANNENBERG

EVERYDAY EATS

When time isn't on your side, try our fast, fresh and delicious ideas for midweek meal inspiration.



CHARRED BROCCOLI WITH
CUCUMBER NOODLES AND
PEANUT SAUCE

How to eat well

Cook, writer, stylist and former member of Jamie Oliver's food team, chef Anna Jones follows up her acclaimed first cookbook with A Modern Way to Cook – a gorgeous new collection of fuss-free, healthy and delicious dishes.



Charred broccoli with cucumber noodles and peanut sauce 🌱

This bowl of freshness and flavour is half based on a banging bowl of dan dan noodles I ate in LA and half based on a charred cauliflower I made a couple of weeks later.

I wanted to put the charred smokiness and the peanutty sweetness in one bowl. Instead of using normal noodles here I've made some quick cucumber noodles with a speed-peeler – they add an amazing freshness and work brilliantly as a foil to the charred smoky broccoli and richly fragrant peanut sauce. If I'm really hungry I serve this with a pile of jasmine rice or noodles.

Serves 4 | Prep/cook 20 mins

For the broccoli:

400g purple sprouting broccoli, or large head of normal broccoli
knob of coconut oil
3 cloves garlic
3 cucumbers
1 tbsp runny honey
1 tbsp tamari or light soy sauce
1 red chilli
1 tbsp sesame oil
1 unwaxed lime

For the peanut ginger sauce:
6 tbsp good quality peanut butter
thumb-size piece of fresh ginger
2 tbsp rice wine vinegar
zest and juice of 1 unwaxed lime
1 tbsp tamari or soy sauce
1 tbsp maple syrup

- 1** Fill and boil a kettle and get all your ingredients together.
- 2** Trim the broccoli and make an incision down each stalk to help them cook quicker. If you are using normal broccoli, cut the bottom of the stem off and slice into long thin trees. Put the trimmed broccoli into a bowl and cover with boiling water from the kettle. Leave for 5 minutes, then drain and set aside.
- 3** Meanwhile, get a small pan on the heat and add a knob of coconut oil. Finely slice the garlic and, once the oil is hot, add to the pan. Fry for a couple of minutes until just crisp, being careful not to burn, then drain on kitchen paper.
- 4** Next, get on with the cucumber noodles. Use a normal speed-peeler to peel each side of the cucumber into thin ribbons, stopping when you get to the watery middle bit, which doesn't make good noodles and discarding the peel if you like. Put a griddle on a high heat to heat up.

5 Now for the peanut sauce. Whisk the peanut butter with 100ml of warm water, then peel and grate in the ginger, add all the other sauce ingredients and mix well. Add a little water if needed – you are after double cream consistency.

6 Toss the broccoli with the honey and soy sauce. Chop the red chilli and add to the broccoli along with the sesame oil. Place on the griddle and cook for a couple of minutes on each side, until nicely charred.

7 Divide the cucumber noodles between your bowls and top with the peanut sauce, broccoli and crispy garlic. Finish with the zest of a lime, then cut the lime into wedges and serve on the side.

■ PER SERVING 394 cals, fat 23.5g, sat fat 8g, carbs 23.5g, sugars 19.5g, protein 17.5g, salt 1.2g, fibre 10g

.....

ANNA SAYS... When you're making the cucumber noodles you'll be left with the middle of the cucumbers. I usually chop them up and use them to infuse my drinking water in the fridge, but sometimes I blitz the middle bits and freeze them in ice cubes for a cucumber-iced gin and tonic. Seriously good.

Pan-roast lime feta and chilli greens burrito

This is a dream of a burrito. It's one of those glorious things that manages to balance hearty with fresh, spicy with sharp, smoky with sweet. I don't like rice in my burrito - to me it's a filler. I'd rather pack it full of flash-fried chilli greens, avocado and smoky lime-spiked beans, but if you're particularly hungry then a scattering of cooked brown rice or quinoa would work here.

Makes 4 burritos | Prep/cook 30 mins

2 cloves garlic
1 red chilli
coconut oil
½ tsp smoked paprika
400g can borlotti beans
4 unwaxed limes
2 handfuls of cherry tomatoes
small bunch of fresh coriander
2 ripe avocados
200g spring greens
a few sprigs of fresh oregano
200g vegetarian feta cheese or firm tofu
red chilli flakes
4 large wholemeal or seeded tortillas

- 1 Get all your ingredients together. You will need two frying pans, one large and one medium.
- 2 Slice the garlic and chilli and put them into a medium frying pan with a little coconut oil. Cook until starting to brown, then add the smoked paprika, the borlotti beans with their liquid and the juice of 1 lime and let it blip away for 10 minutes to heat through.
- 3 Roughly chop the cherry tomatoes and mix them with the juice of half a lime and the chopped coriander. Peel and de-stone the avocados and mash with the juice of the other half lime. De-stem and shred the spring greens. Take the oregano leaves off their stems.
- 4 Grate the zest of a lime over the feta or tofu and scatter over a couple of large pinches of chilli flakes. Put 1 teaspoon of coconut oil into a large frying pan and fry the feta or tofu for 3 minutes each side, until just brown, being careful not to move it too much otherwise it will break up.
- 5 Once the feta or tofu is browned on both sides, take it out of the pan and cover to keep warm. Add the spring greens and oregano to the same pan, with a little oil if needed, and add the zest of a lime, a good pinch of chilli

PAN-ROAST LIME FETA AND CHILLI GREENS BURRITO



flakes and 2 tablespoons of water. Cook away the water and sauté until starting to crisp.

6 Scoop the beans out of their pan into a serving bowl. When the greens are done, put them into another serving bowl and rinse out and dry the pan. Put it back on a high heat and toast the tortillas in the dry pan. If you have a gas stove you can also do this by holding each tortilla with tongs for a few seconds over the open flame.

7 Make your own burritos at the table.

Lay each tortilla on a plate, leaving a bit of space at the top and bottom. Add the warm beans and top with the greens, a few slices of feta or tofu, a spoonful of the tomato salsa and some mashed avocado. Fold the bottom and top of each tortilla over, then bring the sides in and roll the burrito up. Serve with any extra salsa and avocado.

■ PER SERVING 519 cal, fat 31g, sat fat 14.5g, carbs 35g, sugars 6g, protein 20.5g, salt 3.4g, fibre 12.5g

govegan

V Choose Anna's suggestion of tofu as an alternative to feta.

Frying pan squash and cavolo nero pie

This tart is a meeting of two amazing dinners I ate in the same week. One was a light, crisp feta and spinach spanakopita pie in a no-frills Greek café, not far from home. The other was in a great pizza place a few minutes' walk from my house, where I ate a pizza topped with smashed squash, crispy cavolo nero and black olives. I loved the flavours of the pizza so much I wanted to work them into something that was quick enough to make on a weeknight, and this is it. This is a cheat's pie that uses a frying pan instead of a tart tin and is filled with super-quick grated and shredded veg.

Serves 6 | Prep/cook 40 mins

2 red onions
coconut or olive oil
450g butternut squash
bunch of fresh thyme
200g pack filo pastry
2 free-range eggs
100g vegetarian pecorino or Parmesan-style cheese
olive oil
200g cavolo nero or kale
1 unwaxed lemon
100g goat's cheese
100g black olives (I use Kalamata)

1 Preheat your oven to 220C/ fan 200C gas 7 and get all your ingredients together. You'll need a 24cm ovenproof frying pan.

2 Heat a saucepan on a low heat while you finely chop your onions, then turn the heat up to medium, add a little coconut oil and cook the onions for 5 minutes, until soft and sweet.

3 While the onions are cooking, peel and roughly dice the squash. Add it to the onions along with the thyme leaves and cook for 5-10 minutes, until the mixture is dry.

4 Meanwhile, unwrap the sheets of filo and lay them over your frying pan, leaving a little overlap round the

edges (you'll fold this in later). Keep laying the filo in the pan until you have a good sturdy 3-4 sheet layer all over – you may need to patch it together bit by bit if you have small sheets.

5 Once the squash has had 5 minutes, scoop it into a bowl. Crack in the eggs and grate in the pecorino or Parmesan-style cheese. Season with freshly ground black pepper and mix well.

6 Drizzle the filo pastry with a little olive oil, then use a pastry brush to persuade the oil all over the pastry. Spoon the butternut mixture into the pan and put on a medium heat.

7 Working quickly, shred the cavolo

nero and toss it with the juice and zest of the lemon and a little oil. Scatter it on top of the butternut and push down a little into the mixture, then dot the goat's cheese and de-stoned olives on top. Fold the excess filo back over the filling to form a wavy edge. Place on the bottom of the oven and bake for 20-25 minutes, or until golden and crisp.

8 Take out, cut into 6 generous slices and serve with a lemon-dressed green salad and, if you like, some chilli sauce.

■ PER SERVING 354 cals, fat 21.5g, sat fat 8g, carbs 23g, sugars 6.5g, protein 16.5g, salt 2.2g, fibre 4g



FRYING PAN SQUASH AND CAVOLO NERO PIE

'I want stand-out, delicious food that leaves me feeling energised, light, bright and satisfied. It's this intersection between wellness and deliciousness that I strive for with every plate of food I make and eat'



Recipes adapted from *A Modern Way to Cook* by Anna Jones (Fourth Estate/Harper Collins, £25). Photography by Matt Russell.



PEAR,
BLACKBERRY
AND PECAN
SALAD

Liz Martin's meals bridge the gap between summer and autumn, showcasing the best of high summer's plentiful produce in fresh, simple, yet satisfying dishes you can enjoy indoors or out.



HARVEST SUPPERS

Pear, blackberry and pecan salad

Serves 4 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 20 mins

6 tbsp olive oil
3 pears, cored and cut into wedges
1 tbsp soft brown sugar
75g pecan nuts
125g blackberries
1 red onion, shredded
2 heads chicory, broken into leaves
½ x 70g packet wild rocket
4 slices soda bread
chilli oil, for drizzling
1 clove garlic, cut in half
2 tbsp chilli jam
100g vegetarian Stilton, grated
sprigs of fresh thyme
4 tbsp balsamic vinegar
1 tsp wholegrain mustard

1 Preheat the grill. Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a large pan and add the pears and sugar. Gently sauté the pears for about 8–10 minutes, turning once during cooking, until golden. Remove the pears from the pan, place on a plate and allow to cool.

2 Add the pecan nuts and blackberries to the pan and cook for a further 4 minutes, until lightly toasted. Remove the pan from the heat and, using a slotted spoon, arrange the blackberries and nuts on serving plates with the pears, onion, chicory and rocket leaves.

3 Drizzle the slices of bread with a little of the chilli oil. Place under the grill and cook for about 5 minutes, turning once during cooking until toasted. Remove from the grill and rub the cut garlic over the top. Spread with the chilli jam, then top with the

Stilton and thyme leaves. Cook under the grill for a further 4 minutes, until the cheese has melted.

4 Return the pan to the heat and quickly swirl in the remaining oil, with the vinegar and mustard. Drizzle over the salad. Arrange the toasts on the plates and serve.

■ PER SERVING 671 cals, fat 43g, sat fat 9.5g, carbs 59g, sugars 40g, protein 12.5g, salt 1.2g, fibre 9g

govegan

V A vegan blue replaces the Stilton, with tempting options available from Sheese, VBites and No-Moo.

Autumn couscous salad **V**

Serves 4 | Prep 20 mins | Cook 10 mins

100g giant wholegrain couscous
2 corn on the cob
4 tbsp olive oil
300g frozen peas
1 courgette, shredded
1 small red onion, shredded
6 breakfast or mixed coloured radishes, thinly sliced
1 avocado, stoned, peeled and diced
1 bunch flat-leaf parsley, torn
2 tbsp sweet chilli sauce
1 red chilli, finely chopped (optional)
juice of 1 lime

1 Cook the couscous following packet instructions. Allow to cool.

2 Preheat the grill. Place the corn on the cob in a grill pan and brush with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. Place under the grill and cook, turning occasionally until golden and tender. Remove from the heat and allow to cool.

3 Cook the peas in a pan of boiling water for about 3 minutes, until tender. Drain and refresh under cold running water. Drain thoroughly.

4 Using a sharp knife, cut the sweetcorn away from the cob. Place in a large serving bowl with the couscous and peas, and stir in the courgette and onion. Arrange the radishes and avocado on top and scatter over the parsley.

5 Whisk together the chilli sauce, chilli (if using), lime juice and remaining olive oil, until well blended. Drizzle over the salad and serve.

■ PER SERVING 430 cals, fat 20g, sat fat 3.5g, carbs 49.5g, sugars 14g, protein 11.5g, salt 0.8g, fibre 10g



AUTUMN COUSCOUS SALAD

RECIPES AND STYLING: LIZ MARTIN
PHOTOGRAPHY: MICHAEL DANNENBERG



Roasted aubergine, fig and maple feta salad

**Serves 4 | Prep 15 mins + cooling
Cook 45 mins**

1 aubergine, halved lengthways and sliced
8 tbsp olive oil
2 red onions, cut into wedges
2 courgettes, cut into thick sticks
75g pine nuts
8 medium tomatoes, halved
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1 chilli, deseeded and chopped (optional)
100g pitted herb black olives (optional)
4 figs, cut into quarters
3 tbsp maple syrup
8 slices olive ciabatta bread

1 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
200g vegetarian feta cheese, sliced
basil leaves, for scattering

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Toss together the aubergine, 2 tablespoons of the olive oil, the red onion, courgette and pine nuts in a large roasting tin. Arrange the tomatoes in a separate roasting tin, cut-side uppermost. Drizzle over 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. Roast the tomatoes for 30 minutes and the aubergine for 20 minutes.

2 Remove the aubergine from the oven and carefully stir in 1 clove of the garlic, the chilli and olives (if using), and the figs. Bake for a further 5–10 minutes. Remove both the tomatoes and the aubergine from the oven.

Set aside. Drizzle the maple syrup over the aubergine and allow to cool.

3 Meanwhile, arrange the bread slices on a baking sheet. Mix together the remaining cloves of garlic, the remaining olive oil, the parsley and thyme leaves in a small bowl, and brush over the bread slices. Place in the oven and bake for 15 minutes, until golden.

4 Arrange the toasts on plates with the aubergine mixture and tomatoes. Top with the feta and scatter with a few basil leaves. Drizzle over the pan juices, then serve.

■ PER SERVING 890 cals, fat 51g, sat fat 12g, carbs 83.5g, sugars 53g, protein 22g, salt 4.2g, fibre 15g

govegan

V Choose a vegan cheese of your choice to replace the feta.

THAI-STYLE
NOODLE SALAD
WITH CASHEW
AND COCONUT



Thai-style noodle salad with cashew and coconut

Serves 4 | Prep 20 mins + cooling
Cook 15 mins

150g noodles
125g French beans, trimmed and halved
2 tbsp rapeseed oil
100g cashew nuts
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 red chilli, finely chopped
2cm piece of lemon grass, chopped
2cm piece of fresh root ginger, chopped
6 spring onions, sliced diagonally
160g can coconut cream
juice of 2 limes
1-2 tbsp sesame oil

1 bunch of Thai basil leaves, shredded (optional)
2-3 carrots, cut into julienne
2 courgettes, halved lengthways and sliced diagonally
2 pak choi, shredded
good handful of coriander, chopped
sliced red chillies, to garnish

1 Cook the noodles following packet instructions. Drain, refresh under cold running water and drain again. Cook the French beans in a pan of boiling water, until tender. Drain, refresh under cold running water and drain again.


2 Heat the oil in a frying pan and sauté the cashew nuts for 3-5 minutes, until golden. Transfer to a bowl and allow to cool.

3 Add the garlic, chilli, lemon grass and ginger to the frying pan and sauté for 3 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the spring onion, coconut cream, lime juice, sesame oil and basil leaves (if using). Allow to cool completely.

4 Toss the noodles, carrot, courgette, pak choi, French beans, half the cashew nuts, the coconut dressing and half the coriander together. Divide between plates and scatter over the remaining coriander, cashew nuts and sliced chillies before serving.

■ PER SERVING 715 cals, fat 50g, sat fat 27.5g, carbs 47g, sugars 16g, protein 17g, salt 0.5g, fibre 10g

govegan

 To make this dish vegan, opt for rice noodles when cooking the recipe.

SUNDRIED
TOMATO PESTO,
ONION AND
GOAT'S CHEESE
GALETTES



Sundried tomato pesto, red onion and goat's cheese galettes

**Serves 4 | Prep 25 mins + chilling
Cook 30 mins**

320g ready-rolled puff pastry sheet
2 heaped tbsp pine nuts
190g chilled sunblush tomatoes in oil
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 small bunch of basil leaves
4 mixed coloured vine tomatoes, thickly sliced
25–50g small courgettes, thinly sliced
¼ small red onion, sliced
125g vegetarian goat's cheese, sliced and quartered
fresh thyme leaves and flavoured olive oil, to serve

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Unroll the pastry, cut into 4 rectangles and place on a baking sheet. Score out a 1cm border around the edge and a criss-cross pattern on top, then knock up the sides with a sharp knife. Cover with cling film and chill for 30 minutes.

2 Meanwhile, heat a small pan and cook the pine nuts for about 2 minutes, stirring occasionally, until toasted. Remove from the heat and allow to cool.

3 Place the sunblush tomatoes and oil, garlic and basil in a food processor or liquidiser and blend until smooth. Stir in the pine nuts.

4 Remove the pastry from the fridge and prick the surface within the borders using a fork. Spread the pesto over each base within the scored borders. Arrange the tomato, courgette, onion and goat's cheese on top. Bake for 15–25 minutes, until well risen and golden.

5 Transfer to warm plates, scatter over the fresh thyme leaves and drizzle with a flavoured oil of your choice.

■ PER SERVING 565 cals, fat 42g, sat fat 14.5g, carbs 35g, sugars 7g, protein 11g, salt 1.9g, fibre 4.5g

govegan

V Check your puff pastry contains no dairy ingredients before you buy. You can switch the goat's cheese for a melting vegan cheese of your choice, including Tofutti, VBites and Vegourmet.



FATTOUSH WITH PESHWARI NAAN

Fattoush with Peshwari naan

**Serves 4 | Prep 15 mins + cooling
Cook 10 mins**

2 Peshwari naan bread, torn into cubes
½ cucumber, deseeded
275g mixed coloured tomatoes, quartered
280g jar red and yellow peppers
handful of small mint leaves, plus extra to garnish
1 red onion, thinly sliced
3 tbsp red wine vinegar

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Place the naan on a baking sheet and bake for 8–10 minutes, until golden. Remove from the oven and allow to cool.

2 Slice the cucumber and place in a bowl with the tomatoes and naan. Drain the peppers, catching the oil in a bowl. Slice and add to the naan with the mint leaves and onion.

3 Whisk the vinegar with 4 tablespoons of the reserved oil and drizzle over the salad. Toss and serve scattered with more mint leaves.

■ PER SERVING 415 cals, fat 20.5g, sat fat 6.5g, carbs 49g, sugars 13.5g, protein 9g, salt 0.8g, fibre 5.5g

govegan

V Naan often contains egg, so opt instead for pitta or another kind of bread. You can always add in a sprinkling of desiccated coconut, flaked almonds and spiced fruit to the mix!



Dinner delivered

BY LINDSEY HARRAD

Recipe boxes are growing in popularity, offering a menu of recipes plus everything you need to make them. Converts say they are convenient, nutritious and help you get out of that midweek meal rut, but which box do you choose? We put five to the test to find out...

You've got a busy week ahead and little time to shop and cook, so what's the solution? Sure, you can order groceries online and have them delivered, but you've still got to find time to browse recipes, plan your week's menu, place the order and then cook it all. If you're not keen on serving up the same no-brainer dishes you always fall back on, or resorting to ready meals, perhaps a recipe delivery box could be the answer?

It's not a brand-new idea, but it's one that's suddenly taking off in a big way, and there's a growing range of companies keen to tap into a time-poor customer base that works and plays hard, but still likes to come home to exciting, nutritious meals. Patrick Drake, founder of one such company, Hello Fresh, says: 'When we started we had a pretty grandiose vision. We said we wanted to "change the way people eat, forever". We launched our vegetarian offering in the first couple of months because we knew there was a huge opportunity to improve an underserved market. We set out to shake things up and now we've got a really passionate veggie customer base.'

A simple idea

So how does the recipe box concept work? It's a simple idea: a box arrives on a van each week with everything you need to make typically two to four meals for two people, including step-by-step illustrated recipe cards and pre-measured ingredients, usually

only excluding storecupboard basics such as oil, butter, salt and pepper. All of the services we tried delivered the food each week in a recyclable and reusable box, using ice packs and sheep's wool packaging to keep the chilled ingredients cool (which makes these services unsuitable for ethical vegans).

Edible deliveries are commonplace these days, ranging from a complete supermarket shop to an organic veg box, or niche subscriptions such as Graze snacks or Pact coffee. Recipe delivery box services have taken this a step further, inspired by three key trends – our increasingly adventurous foodie tastes; the fact that our busy lives demand culinary convenience – but not at any cost to our health; and a growing desire to reduce food waste, both from a perspective of household thrift and a wider environmental concern.

But recipe boxes are not only convenient, cutting out meal planning and shopping, they are a surprisingly affordable way to be more adventurous in the kitchen. With most delivery boxes working out at between £30–£40 a week, with each dish costing around £5–£6 per head, it may not be a solution for anyone on a very tight budget, but if you tot up the price of buying full-size packs of the nuts, cheeses, spices, fresh herbs and other speciality ingredients used in these recipes it would be considerably more expensive – especially if your chosen box uses organic produce. Plus, the only thing left over is your

recipe cards, so any dishes you particularly love can easily be recreated at other times.

The right box for you

So which is the best recipe box? We were impressed with all the boxes we tried, and with fierce competition in this market, all the services are evidently working hard to attract and keep customers. But our favourite overall was the Riverford box, for its combination of beautiful organic produce, accessible yet interesting recipes and delicious final dishes, and we felt it would not only be suitable for veggies, but also an inspiring way to introduce exciting vegetarian cooking for anyone thinking of going partially or completely meat-free too.

Ultimately, the decision comes down to which you feel includes the kind of recipes you like to eat, together with a delivery time that suits. Some, like Riverford and Abel & Cole, offer advantages such as being able to order extra organic veg and groceries, making it a more complete solution, or even an alternative to the weekly supermarket shop. Others, like Gousto, offer a choice of recipes, which might suit picky eaters or couples where one is veggie and one not, so you can have a mix of veggie and meat dishes. But while brands such as Hello Fresh may have a fixed menu, eliminating choice does perhaps encourage you to embrace the culinary adventure offered by the recipe box concept and try something completely new.

MARLEY SPOON

www.marleyspoon.co.uk

OUR MENU

- Smoked tofu tacos with nectarine salsa
- Vegetable samosas with coconut chutney and tomato salad

HOW IT WORKS It's a flexible subscription so you'll automatically get a weekly box, but you can change the portion numbers and dishes each week, plus pause the service at any time. Each box contains all the ingredients you need and step-by-step illustrated recipes.

FLEXIBILITY You receive a weekly menu by email and can choose which dishes you would like. You have to order a minimum of four portions (e.g. one meal for four, or two meals for two).

COST PER WEEK £45 a week for a three-meal plan for two people; or choose a custom plan to feed up to eight. However, if you opt for eight portions, you can only choose one recipe/meal per box – ideal for easy entertaining. No delivery charge.

DELIVERY A choice of two delivery days, Wednesday or Friday. In London there are timed delivery slots; outside London you can arrange for your box to be left in a safe place.

PROS Food is selected to stay fresh for up to four days if your dining plans change; each

recipe has no more than six steps and most should be on the table in 30–45 minutes.

CONS Usually only two or three vegetarian recipes out of seven choices each week; more complex recipes (the samosas) could benefit from more detailed step-by-step photos; one of the more expensive boxes.

INGREDIENTS Sustainable ingredients and sourcing; as much as possible from the UK with organic produce wherever possible.

WHO'S IT BEST FOR? We felt this box had the potential to be more family-friendly than some, with recipes that would work for children, although some accompaniments were more suited to grown-up tastes. As you are not restricted to an exclusively vegetarian box, this could suit a household with a mix of veggies and meat-eaters.

Our reviewer said: 'We loved the idea of the smoked tofu tacos with a herb and



nectarine salsa, neither of which we would normally make. Portions were generous – we had so much taco filling we needed more than eight mini tortillas for rolling. The samosas were delicious and we had leftovers for lunch the next day. Although they were more time-consuming to make than most recipe box dishes, it was fun and the results were impressive. Definitely a box that encourages you to be more adventurous with your cooking and use of flavours.'



ABEL & COLE

www.abelandcole.co.uk

OUR MENU

- Baked portobello risotto with tarragon gremolata
- Patatas a lo pobre (pan-fried potatoes and peppers with smoky paprika)
- Griddled peach and heirloom tomato salad

HOW IT WORKS You have to sign up for a regular delivery for a Heavenly Veggie Box but it's flexible, so you can opt for deliveries once a week or once a month or even once every eight weeks to suit your needs. Each box includes all the ingredients and accompanying step-by-step recipe cards you need to make three meals for two.

FLEXIBILITY It's a fixed menu of three meals each week so you can't choose the recipes, but you can add extra groceries or a veg box to your order from the standard Abel & Cole shop, for no extra delivery charge.

COST PER WEEK £33 a week for three meals for two people, plus delivery charge of £1.25.

DELIVERY The day of delivery depends on where you live and can't be changed, so check that your area's delivery day suits you.

PROS Organic and high welfare produce; being able to add groceries and veg boxes is convenient and avoids extra supermarket dashes; you can place a regular order or book less regularly if you prefer; recipes are generous enough to serve three people and still leave some bits and bobs for use in other meals.

CONS Less choice for veggies – carnivores can choose from Light, Simple and Foodie boxes and the weekly menu is fixed; recipes not always suitable for family meals.

INGREDIENTS All veggie boxes are organic.

WHO'S IT BEST FOR? A veggie couple or family with very young children that have meals at different times (so the box would be for the adults only). Some recipes are not ideal for family cooking due to the ingredients (strong



flavours such as tarragon) or style (salad not considered a 'dinner' by kids), plus boxes are designed for two people, not three or more.

Our reviewer said: 'The recipes appealed more to my husband and I than the children, and we thought the options were too salad-based. With most dishes focused around a star vegetable, they may not suit fussy eaters, but they could easily be adapted for couples who are not both vegetarian. The quality of the ingredients was excellent, but with meat boxes costing only £3 more (and including free-range meat) the vegetarian box seemed a little pricey by comparison.'



HELLO FRESH

www.hellofresh.co.uk

OUR MENU

- Hoisin stir-fry with rice, yellow pepper and sugar snap peas
- Steve's Leaves with sweet potato, goat's cheese and pecans
- Vegetable-loaded gnocchi with red pesto and pine nuts

HOW IT WORKS A flexible subscription for the Veggie Box with no minimum commitment or order value means you can change your delivery to suit your needs each week. The box contains everything you need to make three meals for two or four people, by following the illustrated step-by-step recipe cards.

FLEXIBILITY You can place your account on pause on the online order calendar by the cut-off date (6pm Wednesday the week



prior to delivery), which is great for planned holidays but doesn't accommodate any last-minute change of plans. However, most ingredients are chosen to stay fresh enough to be used within a week if stored correctly. You can cancel your delivery completely at any time. Meal swapping is not currently an option with the Veggie Box.

COST PER WEEK £33 a week for three meals for two people, or £59 for three meals to serve four people. There is no delivery charge.

DELIVERY The day and time of delivery depends on where you live and can't be changed, but you can nominate a safe place to leave your box if you won't be home.

PROS Lovely fresh ingredients; interesting but not complicated recipes that take around 30 minutes to make, with great results.

CONS Recipes not all suitable for family meals; some ingredients didn't stay fresh for very long.

INGREDIENTS Described as 'seasonal and farm fresh', but not organic.

WHO'S IT BEST FOR? We felt this box would be ideal for a professional couple who love fresh food but lead busy lives. The fixed menu and style of some of the dishes would make it less appealing to a family perhaps, unless you have older children with more adventurous tastes. Although you are restricted to a veggie or non-veggie box with Hello Fresh, the dishes we tried could easily be adapted and added to in order to accommodate a mixed veggie and non-veggie couple if necessary.

Our reviewer said: 'The recipes were simple and designed to be ready in 30 minutes, which is just what you need for a quick midweek meal. However, the dishes were still interesting and included some lovely fresh ingredients such as fennel tops that we wouldn't routinely buy, so it helped us get out of our food rut and we made some delicious discoveries – for example, pecan nuts pair very well with goat's cheese, and pan-frying rather than boiling gnocchi makes them crisp and really brings out the flavour. Overall, this box seemed good value, offering quality produce and plenty of variety in the style of recipes.'



GOUSTO

www.gousto.co.uk

OUR MENU

- Warm Greek salad
- Thai red tofu curry
- Homemade eggs and beans

HOW IT WORKS A flexible subscription with no lock-in or annual fee, and you can pause or cancel your membership at any time. Opt for a box for two to four people for two to four meals a week, including illustrated step-by-step recipe cards.

FLEXIBILITY You can skip a delivery with only three days' notice, but if your plans change most ingredients are chosen to stay fresh enough to be used within a week if stored correctly. You can cancel your delivery completely at any time. Gousto says choice is its USP – customers have a free choice of dishes from 10 recipes posted on the website each week (the week we booked, four of these were vegetarian).

COST PER WEEK Prices range from £29.99 for two recipes to feed two people up to £57.99 for four recipes for four people. All boxes cost the same even if you choose only vegetarian recipes. There is no delivery charge.

DELIVERY You can choose to receive your delivery on Monday, Wednesday, Friday or





Saturday, 8am-7pm, and you can nominate a safe place to leave your box if you won't be home.

Pros Choice - which means you can mix-and-match recipes if you have veggies and non-veggies in your family, or if you don't like the look of one of the veggie options; Gousto also says its food is well balanced and nutritious too - and all three recipes we tried were under 600 calories per portion.

CONS An odd mix of recipes may not suit everyone; recipe cards can be confusing due to layout; some aspects of recipes we felt didn't work that well - marinating tofu in just soy sauce for only 5 minutes resulted in slightly soggy, flavourless tofu slices in our Thai curry.

INGREDIENTS Sourced in the UK and from ethical producers as much as possible, with many organic ingredients.

WHO'S IT BEST FOR? We felt this box would best suit a couple as the dishes are mostly not family-friendly, but Gousto offers greater choice than some other services, which means you can pick and choose to suit your family's tastes.

Our reviewer said: 'We found the menu an eclectic mix of dishes, from super-spicy red Thai curry to a grown-up version of a children's favourite, beans and waffles, in the form of homemade chilli with potato cakes - we thought this recipe might disappoint some people looking for more sophisticated recipes. We enjoyed the twist on a Greek salad, with warm pan-fried veggies served with ciabatta croutons, roasted feta and tomatoes. We liked the organic ingredients, the variety of recipes and the fact that prep times ranged from super-quick 15 minutes to 40 minutes when you have a bit more time.'



RIVERFORD

www.riverford.co.uk

OUR MENU

- Broad bean, beetroot and spelt with sheep's cheese, radish and mint
- Japanese sesame beans with carrot and aduki miso noodles
- Jerk chickpeas and roasted peppers with callaloo (spinach and coconut sauce)

HOW IT WORKS Order a recipe box that includes everything you need for three meals for two or four people with step-by-step illustrated recipe cards to follow.

FLEXIBILITY It's a fixed menu that changes each week, but deliveries are fairly flexible - have a weekly delivery or a one-off, it's up to you. If you set up a regular order, you can cancel up to two working days before delivery day, or pause it for holidays.

COST PER WEEK £33.95 for three meals for two, or £58 to serve four. Delivery is free.

DELIVERY Delivered on a set day every week, which can't be changed, so you'll need to check the delivery day in your area is convenient for you. But you can nominate a safe place for your insulated box to be left if you are out.

PROS Incredibly fresh, high quality organic produce; you can have other Riverford boxes



delivered at the same time (e.g. fruit or veg) and add other groceries too. Interesting but easy to make recipes.

CONS Lack of flexibility - it has a fixed menu and delivery day, but we couldn't fault the box itself.

INGREDIENTS Certified organic produce.

WHO'S IT BEST FOR? As with most of the boxes, we felt these recipes would suit a couple or those with older children rather than a young family. This box is so mouth-watering, it would be a great introduction to how delicious veggie food can be for anyone thinking of taking the plunge into being completely or partially meat-free too.

Our reviewer said: 'Riverford has a great reputation as an organic produce provider, and this was reflected in the quality of the vegetables - everything looked absolutely delicious and beautifully presented in the box. We really enjoyed the recipes, which were simple enough to allow great ingredients to shine, while being interesting enough to introduce some fresh ideas to our repertoire. The box is generous too - portion sizes were large, and there were quite a few leftover bits such as fresh herbs, garlic and aduki beans that we used in other meals. Riverford says their veggie box is the best-seller among their recipe boxes, and it's easy to see why.'

WIN! A RIVERFORD RECIPE BOX

Try out our favourite Riverford vegetarian recipe box for a week - we have five to give away. To enter, go to www.vegetarianliving.co.uk/offers. Competition ends midday 2 September 2015.





The grain event

Food writer Sarah Beattie explores the potential of this versatile storecupboard staple, to create everything from family meals to teatime treats.

A large percentage of the world's population survives on rice: this grass seed nourishes the poorest peoples, providing a fifth of all calories consumed by humans every year. But we are fortunate to have a wide choice of rice varieties available to us, so we can make the most of this versatile staple.

Rice grows in flooded fields – paddies – from China, through Asia, Africa and Europe to the Americas. There are over 100,000 different rice cultivars. You'll find short-, medium- and long-grained rice, with different qualities, uses and flavours. While you may be familiar with brown rice, did you know there are red and black or purple rice too and that their colours actually make them better for you? And not all white rice is the same colour with many having pale tones of green, pink or yellow. Some 'wild' rice is not rice at all, but another grass seed.

Which rice you need depends on the dish you're going to cook: fragrant basmati for its dry, light and fluffy qualities or scented Thai jasmine for a slightly softer texture; Japanese rice must be even stickier to make sushi rolls; and Italian Arborio or carnaroli must go soupy but retain a bite. Not only eaten as whole grains, rice is also sold processed in noodles, dosas and pancakes, flaked, puffed and ground, when it can be used as a flour in cakes and puddings.

Japanese migrants to the US found their rice rolls were very popular in California when they swapped the fatty tuna for homegrown avocados. Some are made 'inside out' – with the seaweed sheets on the inside – but I prefer the neatness of the dark exterior (see opposite).

Paella is now synonymous with the Spanish Costas, but it was originally made inland, without all the seafood. The rice is a medium grain and the texture is drier than a risotto. With my recipe, I cooked some of the vegetables separately to preserve their texture and flavour (see opposite). It's a great informal dish to serve a crowd.

When my youngest, Magdalena, did voluntary work in Nicaragua, everyone in her remote village subsisted on red beans and rice. Here I've offered a Louisiana-based version which is more interesting, and makes a substantial and tasty midweek supper (see page 48).

Ground rice is ideal for gluten-free baking. Try my recipe for blondies – a pale version of brownies (see page 48). You can also use ground rice to make little tarts like Bakewell, replacing the almonds, or make a milk pudding, like a sweet polenta and caramelize the top under the grill.

I was surprised to find Mrs Beeton had an almost identical rice recipe to the traditional

Italian torta di riso (see page 49), without mentioning its heritage. Risotto rice is precooked in milk before being baked with eggs to give a rich dessert, almost like a cheesecake in texture. You could use bay or basil leaves to flavour the torta instead of rum, if you prefer. Simply simmer them in the milk and discard before mixing.

Rice milk is widely available in most supermarkets and wholefood stores or you can make it yourself. Try my Thai twister for a great 'mocktail' with grown-up flavours, but alcohol-free (see page 49).

SARAH BEATTIE

is the author of seven cookbooks and a *Vegetarian Living* regular. She has been vegetarian since she was 17 and revels in the pleasure of good food through the alchemy of cooking. She has appeared on *BBC Food & Drink*, *This Morning* and *Woman's Hour* and has been shortlisted for the prestigious Guild of Food Writers Cookery Journalist of the Year award in 2013 and 2015.



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SPECIAL OFFER
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BEATTIE'S NEW
COOKBOOK ON
PAGE 94



CALIFORNIA
SUSHI ROLLS

California sushi rolls

**Serves 6 | Prep 20 mins + cooling
Cook 15 mins**

- 200g japonica rice
- 250ml boiling water
- 2 tbsp rice vinegar
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 4 tbsp sesame seeds
- 1 large red, yellow or orange pepper
- 2 free-range eggs
- a little oil or butter
- 1 avocado
- 4 sheets nori
- 2-4 tsp wasabi paste
- 1 small jar pickled ginger

1 Put the rice in a sieve and wash under a running tap. Rinse thoroughly, drain and then put into a saucepan with a tight-fitting lid. Add the boiling water, cover and turn to a very low heat. Cook for 12 minutes and turn off the heat.

2 Meanwhile, combine the vinegar, sugar and salt, stirring until dissolved. Pour over the rice, mixing well. Cover with a damp tea towel and leave to cool.

3 Dry-fry the sesame seeds, shaking the pan, until they begin to colour. Leave to cool.

4 Grill the pepper until the skin blackens. Peel off the charred skin, then cut into long strips.

5 Whisk up the eggs and make an omelette

using the oil or butter. Cool and cut into strips.

6 Peel and cut the avocado into strips just before you are ready to assemble the sushi rolls, to keep the surface from turning brown.

7 When you are ready to make the sushi rolls, have a bowl of cold water to hand. Lay out a sheet of nori on a sushi rolling mat (or I used a silicon sheet). Spread thinly with the wasabi paste, then cover with a layer of rice, pressing it down well. Wet your hands in the cold water to stop the rice sticking.

8 Make a depression in the rice 1cm in from the edge, down the longer length. Lay strips of pepper, omelette, pickled ginger and avocado in the depression. Sprinkle the sesame seeds all over the rice then roll up, enclosing the fillings. Try to keep the roll tight and even; work slowly and carefully until you get the knack. Repeat with the rest of the nori, rice and fillings. I wrapped each of my rolls in baking paper and put them in the fridge until I had completed all of them.

9 To serve, take a very sharp knife and cut each roll into 2cm pieces. Clean the knife frequently, sharpening it often to get a good smooth cut.

■ PER SERVING 318 cals, fat 15.5g, sat fat 2.5g, carbs 39g, sugars 9.5g, protein 7g, salt 1.7g, fibre 2.5g

govegan

V Replace the omelette with marinated tofu strips and fry with oil instead of butter. Sesame oil would work well.



SPANISH PAELLA

Spanish paella

Serves 8 | Prep 20 mins | Cook 25 mins

- 1 aubergine
- 2 courgettes
- 1 fennel
- 5 tbsp olive oil
- zest and juice of ½ lemon
- pinch of saffron
- 150ml white wine
- 250g shallots, peeled and quartered
- 4 mild green chillies, cut into large chunks (I used piment d'Espelette but Anaheim or Hungarian Wax are also suitable)
- 250g chestnut mushrooms, wiped and quartered
- 4 cloves garlic, quartered
- 500g paella or Mediterranean rice (I used rice from the Camargue)
- 2 tsp crushed dried smoked ñora peppers or smoked pimentón
- a few sprigs of dried thyme and rosemary
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1.5 litres vegetable stock
- salt and pepper
- 2 vegetarian chorizo sausages (optional)
- 2 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and quartered (optional)
- a few black olives
- a few cherry tomatoes

1 Cut the aubergine, courgettes and fennel into large pieces. Put in a large bowl with

VERY DIRTY RICE AND QUICK RED BEANS



GROUND RICE BLONDIES

2 tablespoons of the oil, and the juice and zest of the lemon. Mix well.

2 Put the saffron to soak in the wine.

3 Heat the remaining oil in a large, wide pan. Fry the shallots, green chillies, mushrooms and garlic until they begin to colour.

4 Add the rice. Fry for a couple of minutes, then add the wine with the saffron and allow to bubble up. Add the ñora and herbs, then the stock. Stir and bring to the boil. Turn down to a bare simmer, stirring occasionally. The rice will be cooked in 20 minutes. Add more liquid only if strictly necessary. Season with salt and pepper.

5 While the rice is cooking, heat a griddle pan or grill and cook the marinated aubergine, courgette and fennel with the vegetarian chorizo.

6 Top the rice with the griddled vegetables and chorizo, plus the eggs, olives and cherry tomatoes. Serve immediately with a fresh green salad.

■ PER SERVING 392 cals, fat 12g, sat fat 2.5g, carbs 60g, sugars 4g, protein 10.5g, salt 1g, fibre 4g

govegan

V Serve without the optional egg or replace with chunks of fried silken tofu carefully coated in flour. VBites Chorizo Style Chunks are vegan.

Very dirty rice and quick red beans **V***

Serves 6 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 35 mins

75g black rice

3 tbsp oil

1 very large green pepper, deseeded and finely chopped

3 stalks celery, finely chopped

2 onions, finely chopped

4 cloves garlic, finely chopped

200g American long-grain rice

1 tbsp dried porcini mushrooms, ground

600ml boiling water, plus extra

salt

1-2 tsp Cajun spice blend or cayenne pepper with thyme, cumin and coriander

800g can red kidney beans

3 spring onions, chopped

1 Put the black rice to soak in hot water.

2 Heat the oil and fry the pepper, celery, onions and garlic very gently until just starting to colour. Put half the mixture in a separate pan.

3 Add the long-grain rice, drained black rice and dried porcini powder to the original pan and stir well. Heat through, then add the boiling water. Cover tightly and reduce to a simmer. Cook for 15 minutes.

4 In the second pan, add the Cajun spice blend and cook for a minute before adding two-thirds of the drained beans. Stir well. Crush the remaining beans with about 100ml boiling water and add to the pan. Stir well and cook until the mixture is thick and creamy.

5 Stir through the spring onions and serve with the rice.

■ PER SERVING 377 cals, fat 8g, sat fat 1.5g, carbs 63g, sugars 7.5g, protein 12g, salt 1.5g, fibre 10g

Ground rice blondies *****

Makes 16 | Prep 10 mins | Cook 40 mins

75g white chocolate

75g butter

2 free-range eggs

200g sugar

'Which rice you need depends on the dish you're going to cook'



TORTA DI RISO



THAI TWISTER

1 tsp vanilla extract
150g ground rice
1 tbsp cornflour
½ tsp baking powder
pinch of salt
50g hazelnuts
50g dried cranberries

1 Preheat the oven to 150C/fan 130C/gas 3. Line a 20cm square cake tin with non-stick baking paper.

2 Combine the chocolate and butter in the top of a double boiler or in a bowl over simmering water. Stir until melted. Leave to cool.

3 Beat together the eggs and sugar until light and thick. Stir in the vanilla. Gradually beat in the cooled chocolate mixture. Sift in the ground rice, cornflour, baking powder and salt. Beat well. Stir through the nuts and cranberries and scrape into the tin.

4 Bake for 40 minutes. Allow to cool completely before cutting into 16 slices. Best stored in a tin and left a day or two before serving.

■ PER BLONDIE 191 cals, fat 8.5g, sat fat 4g, carbs 28g, sugars 18g, protein 11.5g, salt 0.3g, fibre 0.5g

Torta di riso

Serves 8 | Prep 40 mins + chilling

Cook 40 mins

50ml rum (or Amaretto)
75g large raisins
25g good quality candied peel
200g risotto rice, e.g. Arborio or carnaroli
1 litre whole milk
200g sugar
75g blanched almonds
50g butter
finely grated zest of 1 lemon
4 free-range eggs

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Line a deep 25cm cake tin with baking paper.

2 Pour the rum into a small bowl and add the raisins and candied peel. Leave to soak.

3 Rinse the rice and put in a heavy-based pan with the milk and sugar. Cook slowly, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is thick and creamy. Beat in the almonds, butter and the rum and raisin mixture. Cool.

4 Add the lemon zest to the rice. Beat the eggs together thoroughly, then beat into the rice. Scrape into the prepared tin. Shake to level. Bake for about 40 minutes, until browned.

5 Cool and then chill. Serve cut in wedges with fresh fruit.

■ PER SERVING 470 cals, fat 19g, sat fat 8g, carbs 62.5g, sugars 41g, protein 11.5g, salt 0.4g, fibre 1.5g

Thai twister ✔ ❌ V C

Serves 4 | Prep 10 mins + cooling

Cook 7 mins

400ml water
2 tsp dried or fresh lemon grass
2 lime leaves (fresh, dried or frozen)
2 dried red chillies
2 tsp freshly grated ginger
zest and juice of 1 lime
4 tbsp muscovado or palm sugar (jaggery)
750ml rice milk (homemade or shop bought)
ice cubes

1 Put the water, lemon grass, lime leaves, chillies, ginger and lime zest in a small pan with the sugar. Bring to the boil and boil hard until reduced by half. Cool and strain.

2 Squeeze the lime, and add the juice to the rice milk and strained syrup. Mix well.

3 Fill tall glasses full of ice and pour over the rice drink. Serve immediately.

■ PER SERVING 150 cals, fat 0.5g, sat fat 0.5g, carbs 31.5g, sugars 30.5g, protein 7g, salt 0.3g, fibre 0g

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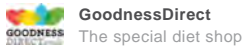
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PHOTOGRAPH: THE GAZTRONOME



COOKING FOR A CROWD

Innovative restaurant Vanilla Black and top chef Gizzi Erskine share their favourite dishes for easy entertaining.



DINNER AT VANILLA BLACK



Recreate the contemporary Vanilla Black dining experience in your home, with this inspiring and innovative menu your friends and family will love.

Main course

Jerusalem artichoke, white wine and thyme pie

Just to clear up any confusion, globe artichokes are the big green spiky things and Jerusalem artichokes are the little knobby things that look like potatoes. They have an unusual sweet flavour that is difficult to describe. Try swapping the white wine for red wine and the thyme for rosemary, simple substitutions that give totally different results.

Taking a few nice ingredients such as white wine and artichokes and dropping them into something as humble as a pie seems a little rebellious, but let's do it anyway!

Serves 4 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 1½ hrs

juice of ½ lemon

1.4kg Jerusalem artichokes (it may seem like a lot, but you will lose some when peeling)

splash of sunflower oil

1 large onion, finely chopped

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

1 large potato, peeled and grated

400ml white wine, something quite dry, plus more if needed

small sprig of thyme

400g shop-bought puff pastry

plain flour, to dust

1 tsp cornflour (try to make sure it is

a level teaspoon, this stuff thickens

aggressively)

sea salt and freshly ground black

pepper

whole milk, to brush

1 Have a bowl of water to hand with the lemon juice squeezed into it. Peel the artichokes; they are tricky, so be prepared for some fun. As you peel them, drop them straight into the water to prevent discoloration.

2 In a large saucepan, pour a touch of sunflower oil and place over a medium heat. Next add the onion, garlic and potato and fry until golden. The mixture may stick, especially the potato, so give it all a good scrape. This will give colour to the overall dish.

3 Next, tip all the fried vegetables into a bowl and set aside. Add a little more oil to the pan to heat, then drain the artichokes and add to the hot oil, stirring over a high heat until golden on all sides.

4 Add the reserved vegetables, wine and sprig of thyme (this will infuse the vegetables with its flavour; you will lift it out later). Top up with cold water to cover and simmer very gently for 10-15 minutes or until the artichokes are tender when pierced with a knife.

5 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Fish out the sprig of thyme and throw it away. Then, using a slotted spoon, remove all the vegetables, draining well. Share them between four individual pie dishes or your favourite bowls - ovenproof of course - or just spoon into one large pie dish.

6 Now, increase the heat under the remaining liquid (that's why you removed the vegetables, or they would have fallen to pieces). Bubble the liquid to evaporate by half, to concentrate the colour and flavours.



JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE, WHITE WINE AND THYME PIE

7 Meanwhile, roll out the pastry on a lightly floured worktop and cut out the pastry lids, making them slightly bigger than the pie dishes or dish to allow for shrinkage.

8 When the liquor has evaporated by half, reduce the heat, mix the cornflour with a little cold water so it is the consistency of single cream and carefully whisk the cornflour into the liquid. It will thicken quickly. Season and add a little more wine if it is too thick for your taste.

9 Pour a little of the sauce on to the vegetables, brush a little milk around the rim of the dish, place the pastry on top and press to seal the edges. Brush more milk on top of the pastry, then pierce a vent hole in the top. You can make shapes with pastry scraps to decorate the pies if you are feeling adventurous. If you are not, just put them in the oven and bake small pies for 10 minutes or a large pie for 35–45 minutes, or until the pastry is risen and golden. Serve immediately.

COOK'S TIP Jerusalem artichokes oxidise quickly, so you need to peel them and drop them into cold water mixed with the juice of half a lemon to prevent discoloration.

■ PER SERVING 630 cals, fat 34.5g, sat fat 11.5g, carbs 57.5g, sugars 11g, protein 7.5g, salt 1.9g, fibre 5.5g

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V Brush the pastry with soya, or other non-dairy milk – and make sure you choose a butter-free puff pastry.

Side dish

Honey-glazed carrots with chervil

A nice way to cook carrots, which accentuates their sweetness. Chervil is a pretty herb and always makes a good garnish, but equally works well as an ingredient. It has a mild aniseed flavour. You may find it hard to get hold of, so you could use tarragon instead.

Serves 4 | Prep 5 mins | Cook 20 mins

500g carrots, such as Chantenay or heritage
sea salt
2 tbsp runny honey
small bunch of chervil

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4.
- 2 You need to slightly cook the carrots first, because completely cooking them in the oven can make them tough. Bring a large pan of water to the boil to which you have added a little salt. While it heats up, peel the carrots and remove the tops.
- 3 When the water boils, add the carrots. Simmer for 5 minutes, then remove with a slotted spoon and put straight into a roasting tray.
- 4 Drizzle with the honey and season with a little more salt, give a stir so that the carrots are evenly coated, then pop them in the hot oven for 10–15 minutes or until tender when pierced with a knife and sticky.
- 5 As the carrots roast, chop the chervil finely. When it comes to the last 5 minutes of roasting, bring the carrots out of the oven,



HONEY-GLAZED
CARROTS WITH
CHERVIL

give them a stir and sprinkle on most of the chervil, then pop back in the oven to finish.

6 Serve immediately, sprinkling the carrots with the remaining chervil.

■ PER SERVING 84 cals, fat 0.5g, sat fat 0g, carbs 17.5g, sugars 17g, protein 1g, salt 1g, fibre 4.5g

Dessert

Blackberry and almond crumble cake

The crumble element in this cake is quite easy to make, as you bake it separately so that you can sprinkle it on at the end. This keeps it crunchy, as you only need to add it shortly before serving. We use sunflower oil

instead of butter for the sponge, as it gives a wonderful moist fluffiness and means the toasted almond and blackberry flavours are the focus, rather than heavier, richer butter.

Serves 12 | Prep 30 mins | Cook 1 hr 55 mins

For the cake:

unsalted butter, for the tin
125g ground almonds
5 free-range eggs
250g sunflower oil
250g golden caster sugar, plus 25g for the purée
125g self-raising flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp almond extract
pinch of sea salt
350g blackberries

For the crumble:

50g cold unsalted butter, chopped
75g plain flour
25g demerara sugar
½ tsp ground cinnamon
pinch of sea salt

To decorate:

50g flaked almonds
icing sugar, to dust (optional)

1 Preheat the oven to 155C/fan 135C/gas 3. Butter a 23cm springform cake tin and line the base with baking parchment.

2 Spread the ground and flaked almonds on separate baking trays and toast for 15–20 minutes, turning them with a spatula every 5 minutes so they cook evenly, or until golden brown. Set aside to cool.

3 For the cake, combine the eggs, oil and the 250g of sugar in a large mixing bowl using a whisk (or mix in a food mixer fitted with the beater attachment). Whisk for several minutes, or until it turns very thick and pale (don't skip this step, or you may find that the batter tends to separate). Then add the flour, ground almonds, baking powder, almond extract and salt.

4 Take 75g of the blackberries, cut them in half and fold them into the batter. Spoon into the prepared tin and bake for 55–60 minutes, or until firm to the touch and a skewer inserted into the middle of the cake comes out clean. Allow to rest in the tin for 10 minutes, then turn out on to a wire rack to cool.

5 Meanwhile, to make the crumble, rub the butter into the flour, sugar, cinnamon and salt in a large mixing bowl to form a texture like crumbs (or you can pulse the ingredients together in a food processor). Spread evenly over a non-stick baking tray and bake for 30–35 minutes or until golden brown, turning with a spatula every 10 minutes to ensure even cooking. Allow to cool.

6 To make the purée, place a small pan over a low heat. Tip in 200g of the remaining blackberries with the remaining 25g of caster sugar and 4 tablespoons of water and cover the pan. Once the berries have softened (a matter of a few minutes), remove from the heat. Blend to a purée with a hand-held blender, then pass through a fine sieve to remove the seeds. Set aside to cool.

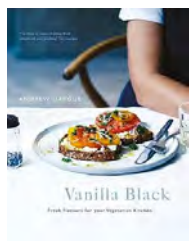


BLACKBERRY AND ALMOND CRUMBLE CAKE

'Our food is challenging. It's different. Smashing stereotypes and proving that vegetarian cuisine can become mainstream' ANDREW DARGUE AND DONNA CONROY, OWNERS OF VANILLA BLACK

7 When you're ready to assemble the cake, spoon the blackberry purée over the top of the sponge, then scatter the crumble and flaked almonds all over. Finish with the remaining blackberries and dust with icing sugar, if you like. This cake is lovely served with a dollop of mascarpone.

■ PER SERVING 516 cal, fat 35.5g, sat fat 6.5g, carbs 42g, sugars 28.5g, protein 8g, salt 0.6g, fibre 3g



Recipes adapted from *Vanilla Black: Fresh Flavours for Your Vegetarian Kitchen* by Andrew Dargue with Alice Hansen (Salt Yard Books, £25). Photography by Emma Lee.

ABOUT VANILLA BLACK

Established in 2004, Michelin-recommended restaurant Vanilla Black is renowned for contemporary vegetarian cuisine. The team, led by owners Andrew Dargue and Donna Conroy, are passionate about combining original flavour combinations and modern techniques to create inventive, delicious food that pushes the boundaries of meat-free cooking.

Find out more at www.vanillablack.co.uk or book a table on 020 7242 2622.

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DIG IN!



IMAGE CREDITS: THE GAZTRONOME
HOME ECONOMISTS: SOFIA JOHANSSON, ANNA JONES, EMILY EZEKIEL, KAT MEAD

Nachos with refried beans

My best night in ever is watching a good horror movie and having my fill of chips and dips. And the best way to have chips and dips is with nachos. I prefer my nachos with refried beans instead of chilli con carne – and it's not often you'll see me choose veggie over meat. Making your own refried beans is easy and so much tastier than the shop-bought options. I've used pinto beans as they are classic, but the recipe works well with red kidney and black beans too.

Serves 4 as a starter or 2-4 as a film-night snack | Prep 20 mins | Cook 35 mins

150g plain tortilla chips
100g vegetarian Cheddar cheese, grated
80g soured cream
3 tbsp sliced pickled jalapeños
coriander leaves, to garnish

For the salsa:

3-4 tomatoes, deseeded and finely chopped
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
1 clove garlic, grated
juice of 1 large juicy lime
½ tsp sea salt flakes
½ tsp extra-virgin olive oil

For the guacamole:

2 very ripe avocados, skins and stones removed
juice of 1 large lime
1 chilli, deseeded (unless you like it spicy) and finely chopped
1 clove garlic, grated
pinch of ground cumin
1 large ripe tomato, deseeded and finely chopped
2 spring onions, finely sliced
sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper



NACHOS WITH REFRIED BEANS

For the refried beans:

4 tbsp cooking oil
1 onion, finely chopped
6 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 tbsp cumin seeds
1 tsp ground coriander
400g can pinto beans, drained and washed
300ml fresh veggie stock (see recipe, opposite)
sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper

1 Make the salsa by mixing together the tomatoes, chilli, garlic, lime juice, salt and olive oil in a bowl. Set aside to macerate while you make the rest of the dish. By the time you get to use the salsa it will be really

watery: that's the salt taking the water out of the tomatoes. Drain off this water but don't throw it away or I will hunt you down! Drink it – it's pure essence of tomato and the yummiest thing on the planet.

2 To make the guacamole, mash the avocado in a mortar with a pestle or in a bowl with a fork. Mix in the lime juice, chilli, garlic, ground cumin, tomato and spring onions and season with salt and pepper. Lay some cling film over the top of the guacamole and set aside.

3 To make the refried beans, heat the oil in a frying pan. Add the onion and fry slowly for about 10 minutes, or until soft and lightly golden, adding the garlic and cumin seeds during the final 1-2 minutes. Add the ground

VEGGIE STOCK

- 4 onions, quartered
- 1 bulb of garlic, halved horizontally
- 4 carrots, chopped into 3 pieces
- 4 leeks, chopped into 3 pieces
- 2 parsnips
- a few outer cabbage leaves
- a few fresh herbs, such as parsley stalks and thyme sprigs
- 1 bay leaf
- 8 black peppercorns

Place everything in a large saucepan, cover with cold water and cook gently for 20 minutes. Vegetable stock can taste and smell too strong if it's cooked for too long - think of the stewed veg you used to get at school!

coriander and fry for a further 30 seconds. Add the beans, stir to coat with the oniony spices, and then pour over the stock. Bring to a gentle boil, then reduce the heat and cook over a low heat for 10 minutes.

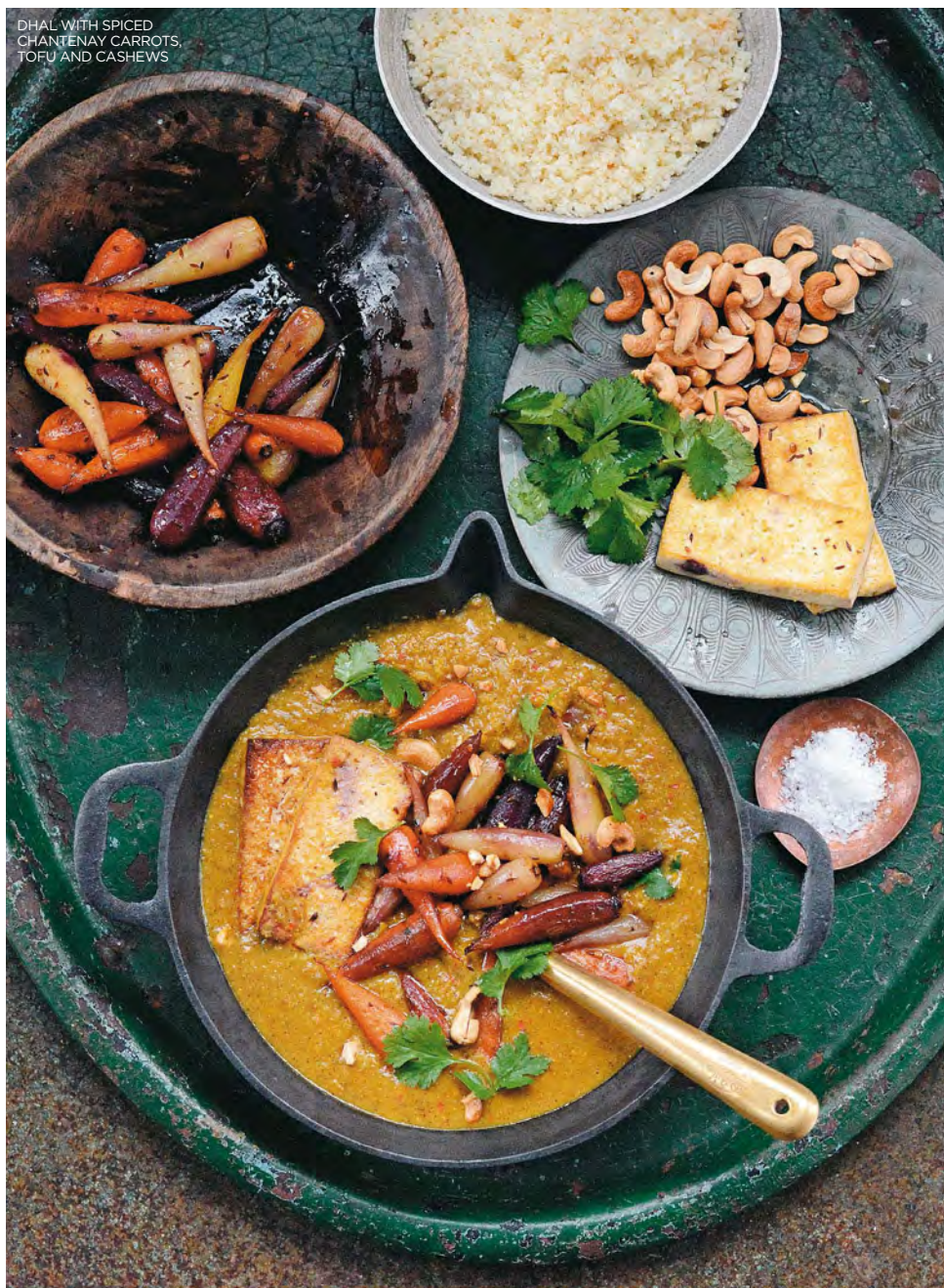
4 When there are only about 3 tablespoons of the liquid left, blend the beans in a food processor until smooth. Wipe the frying pan clean and then return the beans to the pan (you may need a spot more oil when doing this, depending on how non-stick your pan is). Fry the beans for about 5 minutes or until they change colour and thicken up (they should be like a thick hummus). Season to taste with plenty of salt and pepper.

5 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Place the tortilla chips in an ovenproof bowl and top with the cheese. Bake them for 10 minutes, or until the cheese has melted.

6 Remove from the oven and top with a layer of the hot refried beans - it looks like loads but I swear you need it all. Next, top this with a good 2 tablespoons of guacamole, then the same amount of salsa and the same amount of soured cream. Sprinkle over the jalapeños, garnish with coriander and you're good to go!

■ PER SERVING 729 cals, fat 48.5g, sat fat 14g, carbs 49g, sugars 11g, protein 20g, salt 4.4g, fibre 15.5g

'Food makes people happy and has a way of soothing us from the inside out'



Dhal with spiced chantenay carrots, tofu and cashews V

When I'm a misery, a warming bowl of dhal is the thing that will cheer me up. I make dhal a lot, mostly because it's a storecupboard dish and I've always got the base ingredients to hand. The base of this dhal is pretty classic, although it may seem weird having to blend sesame seeds with spices - they act as flavour, but also as an enricher for a really creamy finish. Then we roast a whole bunch of multicoloured heritage carrots, some tofu and cashew nuts and serve them on top for a more complete dinner. I serve this with cauliflower rice for an even bigger nutritional punch.

Serves 4 | Prep 20 mins | Cook 1½ hrs

800g heritage (multicoloured) chantenay carrots, peeled
 1 tbsp coconut oil
 1 tsp cumin seeds
 ½ tsp chilli flakes
 4 x 1.5cm slices of firm tofu

For the dhal base:
 1 tbsp black mustard seeds
 1 tbsp cumin seeds
 1 tbsp coriander seeds
 1 tbsp white sesame seeds
 ¼ tsp dried chilli flakes
 2 tsp vegetable oil
 2 onions, chopped

Cauliflower rice **V**

Everyone is going mad for spiralized vegetables and vegetable rices. I wasn't convinced about them to begin with, but the whole don't knock it 'til you try it rule absolutely came into its own here. The recipe is so simple, I'm now hooked and into trying out loads of rice and couscous recipes with this method.

1 cauliflower (about 250–300g), trimmed
1 tbsp oil or butter of your choice
50ml fresh veggie stock (or water is fine)
a good pinch of sea salt flakes

1 Place the cauliflower in a food processor and blitz it on the pulse setting until it resembles something the size of rice.



2 Heat the oil or butter in a frying pan with a lid. Throw in the cauliflower and cook over a high heat for a minute or so to sear the outside, stirring continuously. You don't want the cauliflower to colour, so keep it moving.

3 Pour over the stock, add some salt and cover with the lid. Cook for 5 minutes, then remove the lid and cook until the stock has reduced into the rice. It's now ready to serve.

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V Opt for oil instead of butter, when frying the cauliflower.

6 cloves garlic, grated
thumb-sized piece of fresh turmeric, grated, or 1 tbsp ground turmeric
thumb-sized piece of fresh root ginger, grated
1 red chilli, finely chopped
100g red lentils
500ml fresh veggie stock (see recipe, page 59)
400ml can coconut milk
sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper

To serve:
handful of fresh coriander leaves
100g cashew nuts
cauliflower rice (see recipe, above)

1 To make the dhal, bash the mustard seeds, cumin seeds, coriander seeds, sesame seeds and chilli flakes together with a pestle in a mortar, or use a spice grinder.

2 Heat 1 teaspoon of oil over a low heat in a large saucepan. Add the onions and fry very slowly for about 20 minutes, or until they have really softened and start to turn golden brown.

3 Add the garlic, turmeric, ginger and chilli and fry for 2 minutes, then add the spices and fry for 1 minute. Add the lentils to the pan and stir to coat them in the spices. Cover with the stock and coconut milk and bring to the boil, then lower the heat and simmer for 30 minutes. Season with plenty of salt and black pepper.

4 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Put the carrots in a baking dish. Mix the coconut oil together with the

cumin seeds, chilli flakes and plenty of salt and pepper, then rub over the carrots. Roast for 30–35 minutes, stirring halfway through.

5 For the last 15 minutes of roasting, put the tofu and the cashew nuts into the dish with the carrots and swiftly coat in the spices. Place back in the oven, turning the tofu after 10 minutes.

6 Serve the dhal in bowls, each topped with tofu, roasted carrots, some cashews and fresh coriander, alongside cauliflower rice.

■ PER SERVING 761 cal, fat 54.5g, sat fat 21g, carbs 46.5g, sugars 24.5g, protein 22.5g, salt 1.2g, fibre 12g

Molten caramel and chocolate puddings

Chocolate with salted caramel is the best pudding combination ever. If it (or rhubarb) is on the menu then I have to order it – and I'm not especially a pudding person. Here is the ultimate version of this combination of ingredients: a baked chocolate pudding with a molten base of salted caramel. It's hot, it's gooey, it's salty, sweet and chocolatey, and it's messy home cooking. I don't think you've eaten this right unless it's all over your face and you're licking the dish.

Serves 6 (it's rich) | Prep 20 mins + setting | Cook 30 mins

150g unsalted butter, plus extra for greasing



MOLTEN CARAMEL AND CHOCOLATE PUDDINGS

1 tbsp rice flour, for dusting
 160g good-quality chocolate
 8 tbsp cocoa powder
 small pinch of sea salt flakes
 4 free-range eggs
 200g caster sugar
 3 tbsp maple syrup
 1 tsp vanilla extract
 3 tbsp double cream
 crème fraîche, to serve

For the caramel:
 150g caster sugar
 65g butter, diced
 100ml double cream
 1 tsp sea salt flakes

1 Butter 6 medium ramekins (or a large 5 x 11cm baking dish), then dust with rice flour.

2 To make the caramel, melt the sugar with a splash of water in a saucepan over a medium heat until it is a light golden colour. Whisk in the butter, then the double cream and finally the salt. Pour the caramel about 1cm deep into the base of the prepared ramekins or dish, then leave in the fridge for 20 minutes to set. Reserve any caramel leftover for serving.

3 When the caramel has almost set, start making the chocolate pudding. Preheat the oven to 140C/fan 120C/gas 1. Melt together the butter, chocolate, cocoa powder and salt in a heatproof bowl over a bain-marie, stirring until it is smooth.

4 In a separate bowl, beat the eggs and sugar together until light and well creamed. Beat in the maple syrup, vanilla extract and double cream, then pour in the chocolate mixture and mix well.

5 Pour on top of the set caramel and bake in the oven for 25–30 minutes, or until it's puffed up and set on top but still has a slight wobble in the very centre.

6 Remove from the oven and leave to sit for 5 minutes. Serve with a dollop of crème fraîche and any leftover caramel.

■ PER SERVING 1,017 cals, fat 68g, sat fat 41.5g, carbs 94.5g, sugars 86.5g, protein 11g, salt 2.5g, fibre 3g



Recipes adapted from *Gizzi's Healthy Appetite* by Gizzi Erskine (Mitchell Beazley, £25).

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If the smallest members of the family are the hardest to please, be inspired by our tasty ideas and they'll be asking for seconds!



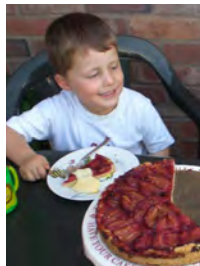
PHOTOGRAPH BY ULRIKA POUSETTE

Home cooking with Chava

With a new school year looming, try Chava Eichner's filling, fuss-free one-pot dinner ideas for busy families.



Where did those summer holidays go? Back in July, that last day of school promised an endless expanse of freedom and carefree play... and here we are again! In a few days I'll be ironing labels into school uniforms and hunting out those buried PE kits.



That end-of-term school bell sounded magical for kids and parents alike. However, in reality, it's not always smooth sailing for families. This year's seven-week summer holiday has proved particularly tricky for many of my friends. I've heard that 'guilt' word uttered countless times!

Working parents would, without doubt, love to spend more time with their children and less time worrying about expensive childcare and holiday clubs. If only there was an easier solution for employees, with more flexibility and more emphasis on family time. Shouldn't we all campaign for this?

Until that happens, our only choice is to make the most out of the time we can spend together. Switch off the phone, ignore the work emails (yes, I'm guilty too!) and give our kids the feeling they are the only thing that truly matters right now. A few hours of uninterrupted quality time means so much, creating memories they will treasure forever. After all, it won't be long until my boys are too grown-up for water balloon fights and den building!

In fact, it was only a couple of months ago when I joked about feeding teenage children. Well, it looks like I'll be there much sooner than expected! Our little family is about to grow with the addition of a lovely teenage student, Noemi, visiting from Germany. So there'll be 'business wear' for our new sixth-form girl hanging next to the boys' school shorts and jumpers on the washing line. She has been vegetarian from the age of two and I'm already looking forward to being inspired by her favourite dishes.

With all this planning for the new school year (and adjusting to being a family of five), I am reminded how busy and exhausting the start of term can be – for kids and parents! So this month, I've chosen seasonal meals that don't need continuous supervision and stirring. Best of all, these one-pot main courses create a minimum of washing-up. Win-win!



Rustic lentil stew ✓

As a child I spent a lot of time with my grandparents. Whenever I cook this lentil stew it brings back memories of the whole family sitting around the large living room table. I'm pretty sure my grandparents used red wine vinegar in their recipe, but I really like the mellow sweetness of the balsamic vinegar. If you like you can also add some finely chopped celeriac or celery.

Serves 6 | Prep 10 mins | Cook 30 mins

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 leek, quartered lengthwise and finely sliced
- 300g brown lentils
- 2 dried bay leaves (or 1 fresh)
- ½ tsp brown sugar
- 1 litre vegetable stock
- 3 potatoes, diced
- 2-3 carrots, finely chopped
- 75-100g kale
- 4 vegan hotdog sausages (e.g. Taifun, VBites or Fry's), sliced
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- small handful of fresh parsley, chopped

1 Heat the oil and gently sauté the onion and leek until they begin to soften.

2 Rinse the lentils under cold water and add to the saucepan, together with the bay leaves, sugar and vegetable stock. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to a gentle simmer.

3 Add the potato and carrot, together with the kale, to the lentils. Continue to simmer for 20 minutes or until the lentils are tender.

4 Add vegan hotdog sausages to the stew and heat through.

5 Just before serving, stir in the balsamic vinegar and fresh parsley. Season the stew with salt and pepper to taste. Serve with crusty bread and some extra balsamic vinegar on the side.

■ PER SERVING 712 cals, fat 25.5g, sat fat 8g, carbs 95g, sugars 22.5g, protein 25.5g, salt 2.1g, fibre 14g

Butterbean hotpot ✓

Once you've made the filling for this hotpot you can just pop it in the oven and forget about it for the next 45 minutes. My friend Sam is always on the lookout for recipes that will keep the whole family well fed without complicated ingredient lists and endless shopping trips. This one's for you, Sam!



Serves 6 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 55 mins

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 medium onions, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 400g can butterbeans, drained
- 600g (1½ cans) chopped tomatoes
- 1 yellow pepper, deseeded and chopped
- 100g French beans, trimmed and sliced
- 50g sundried tomato paste (e.g. Sacla)
- 3–4 tbsp red wine (optional)
- 1 level tsp sugar
- 1 sprig of fresh rosemary
- salt and pepper
- 2 large potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 sweet potato, peeled and thinly sliced
- a little extra vegetable oil, for brushing

- 1** Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4.
- 2** Heat the olive oil in an ovenproof casserole pot and sauté the onions until they become translucent. Add the garlic, butterbeans and chopped tomatoes.
- 3** Stir the pepper and French beans into the tomato bean ragout, together with the sundried tomato paste, red wine, sugar and rosemary. Simmer over a medium heat for 10 minutes. Adjust the seasoning to taste.
- 4** Arrange the potato and sweet potato slices over the bean mixture (if you don't have an ovenproof casserole pot, transfer the beans into a suitable dish first). Get creative with the layering – the contrast between white potato and orange sweet potato slices looks very attractive. Brush the potato slices with a little vegetable oil and sprinkle with a pinch of salt and some ground black pepper.
- 5** Bake the hotpot for 40–45 minutes, or until the potatoes begin to turn golden and crispy. A watercress, rocket and herb salad would add some delicious seasonal greens to this meal.

COOK'S TIP If you'd like a little extra flavour in the hotpot, add a pinch of cayenne pepper and ½ tsp cumin seeds when you're cooking the tomato and bean filling.

■ PER SERVING 262 cals, fat 8.5g, sat fat 1g, carbs 35g, sugars 11.5g, protein 7g, salt 1.6g, fibre 8g



BAVARIAN PLUM CAKE

Bavarian plum cake V

Zwetschgendatschi, as this cake is called in Germany, is as traditional as beer and sausages in Bavaria. The tartness of the plums together with the sweet pastry is mouth-wateringly good! Funnily enough, it also reminds me of Alex's very first day at school. I baked it for an after-school treat to keep myself distracted in a very quiet house...

Serves 12 | Prep 25 mins + chilling
Cook 40 mins

For the pastry:
125g dairy-free margarine
60g caster sugar
250g plain flour
pinch of salt
3 tbsp dairy-free milk

500g ripe plums

For the streusel topping:
50g dairy-free margarine
50g light brown sugar
1 tsp cinnamon
100g self-raising flour

- 1** Blend the margarine and sugar until fluffy. Add the flour and salt. You can either mix the dough with the back of a fork, or use a food processor and pulse the mixture until it becomes crumbly. Knead briefly and add a tablespoon of milk at a time, until the dough comes together in a ball. Wrap in cling film and chill in the fridge for 1 hour.
- 2** Meanwhile, slice the plums in half and remove the stones. For the traditional layered cake, cut each plum in half lengthwise again,

but not all the way through. You'll be able to layer them flatter that way, like roof tiles.

3 To make the streusel topping, combine the margarine, sugar and cinnamon and rub the flour into the mixture.

4 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Line a 24cm round springform cake tin with baking paper.

5 Press the dough into the prepared tin using your fingers. The dough will be quite soft, so if it breaks apart just patch it up, and press it round and up the sides to catch all the lovely plum juice.

6 Layer the plums on top, starting from the outer edge and working in a spiral towards the middle. Sprinkle with the streusel topping and bake for 35–40 minutes.

7 If the plums are very tart, serve with an extra sprinkling of caster sugar. Delicious on its own or with some whipped soya cream.

■ PER SERVING 264 cals, fat 12.5g, sat fat 2.5g, carbs 36g, sugars 14g, protein 3g, salt 0.5g, fibre 2g

CHAVA EICHNER is a freelance food writer and photographer who passionately creates for Viva!, Animal Aid and National Vegetarian Week, among many others. She lives in the Cotswolds with her partner David and two young boys, Sam (8) and Alex (6). Go to her website and blog where you'll find more mouth-watering food inspiration at www.flavourphotos.com.

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Explore the great outdoors

It's berry nice to go foraging

One of the easiest and safest types of produce to forage, wild blackberries are abundant almost everywhere in the UK. Try country lanes, along canals and field hedgerows to find these juicy treats. All you need is a plastic container – these delicate berries squish and spoil easily so a box is often better than a bag – and it's a good idea to wear long sleeves as bramble bushes can scratch.

Blackberries are at their peak from late August and throughout September – by October these fruits will be starting to go past their best due to the damper weather, so get foraging while the sun shines!

Choose plump, glossy and firm

fruits for the best flavour, and don't pick berries on low branches (dog wee!) or too high (leave them for the birds). Avoid picking from bushes close to busy roads too, as these may be polluted.

Freshly picked blackberries should be eaten within two or three days.

Wash just before you want to eat or use them, so they don't go squishy.

TIP If you pick a good haul and want to freeze some to use another time, wash the berries, pat them dry and either purée to use in sauces or smoothies, or place on a baking tray in the freezer. Once frozen, they can then be bagged and used in baking or smoothies, with no defrosting necessary.

DISCOVER



How to use your hedgerow harvest

Use blackberries either whole or as a purée in fruity smoothies, as a topping for porridge or yogurt and granola for breakfast, or with ice cream for a quick dessert. If you love to bake, add them to muffins or layer with apples in a seasonal crumble.

Make mini pavlovas!

These tasty desserts are a great way for kids to enjoy their foraged blackberries or other fresh fruit, and they'll have great fun customising their toppings.

Makes 12 | Prep 10 mins

Cook 1¼ hrs

Meringue nests:

4 free-range egg whites
200g caster or granulated sugar
1 tbsp cornflour
1 tsp distilled vinegar
butter, for greasing

Fruit sauce:

3 passion fruits
3 tbsp lemon curd

Topping suggestions:

Double or whipping cream,
berries or other fruit, sprinkles
or sweets, nuts – it's your choice!

1 Preheat the oven to 120C/
fan 100C/gas ½.

2 Whisk the egg whites until stiff. Stir in the sugar and continue whisking until the mixture is shiny and can be pulled out by the whisk to form shiny peaks. Fold in the cornflour and distilled vinegar.

3 Grease circles (about 10cm across) on a sheet of baking parchment. Spoon the meringue mixture on to the circles and even them out a little.

4 Bake in the oven for 1¼ hours, then turn the oven off but leave

the meringues in the oven for a few hours.

5 Scoop out the seeds and pulp from the passion fruits into a bowl and mix with the lemon curd. The fresh, tart sauce is delicious with the sweet meringue and the cream.

6 To serve, start by adding a dollop of sauce directly on to the meringue, followed by cream, and finishing off with a small mountain of berries/nuts/sweets on top.

COOK'S TIP Meringues can be made several days in advance and stored in a dry place. If short on time, this recipe works equally well with good quality shop-bought meringue nests.

■ PER PAVLOVA (WITHOUT EXTRA TOPPINGS) 109 cals, fat 2g, sat fat 1g, carbs 23g, sugars 19.5g, protein 1g, salt 0.1g, fibre 0g

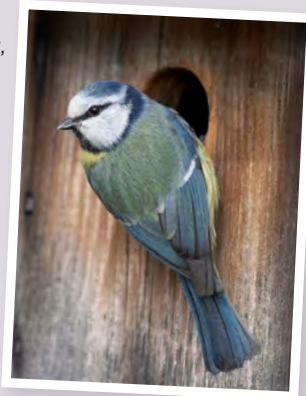
COOK



Adapted from *Very Veggie Family Cookbook* by Sara Ask and Lisa Bjärbo (Pavilion, £14.99).
Recipe photography by Ulrika Pousette.

Support your local wildlife

If you're looking for fun family activities you can enjoy in your own back garden or local community, the RSPB has launched a new campaign to 'give nature a home in your garden'. For brilliant inspiration, you can download or request by post the RSPB's '20 Ways to Give Nature a Home' activity pack, which includes simple ideas such as making a bird feeder or setting up a bee hotel, to bigger projects including building a bat box, establishing a log pile or making a pond. It's all about creating little havens for wildlife to thrive in your own back garden, so download your pack from www.rspb.org.uk and get involved.



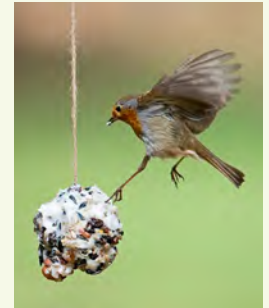
MAKE

3 WAYS TO...

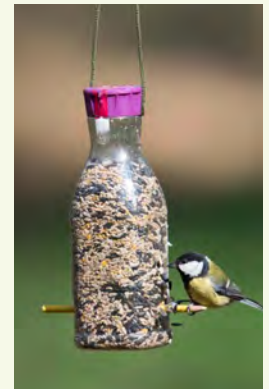
Create a bird café

By providing food for birds you not only help the survival of our garden species, but also provide endless enjoyment for your family as you watch the birds coming and going. Keep a diary and you'll all be experienced twitchers by the time the RSPB's annual Big Garden Birdwatch comes around in January!

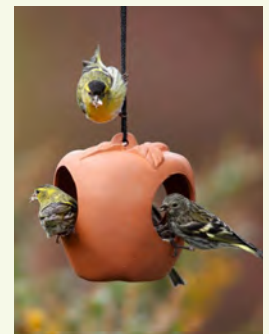
1 Pine cones are great for filling with tasty treats for hungry birds. Tie a loop of string around the base for hanging, and then cram the gaps with goodies. Grated cheese and raw pastry work well. You can even dip the pine cones in unsalted peanut butter and then sprinkle them with bird seed.



2 Raid your recycling box for an old plastic drinks bottle. Make two small holes opposite each other, near the bottom of your bottle, and push a long pencil or piece of cane through them. Repeat the process slightly higher up the bottle, with the pencil sticking out the other side. These will act as perches for the birds, so they need to fit snugly. Pierce a small hole above each perch that is slightly bigger than the size of the seeds. Fill your feeder with birdseed and replace the cap, then use wire or string to hang it from a tree or your washing line. If your feeder starts to wear out or the food in it goes mouldy, simply recycle it and make another one!



3 If you want a more stylish option, the RSPB sells a wide range of bird feeders. We love this fun terracotta apple design, £11.50 from www.shopping.rspb.org.uk.



Remember to keep feeding the birds all year round as they will come to rely on your café, especially during the breeding season and in winter when natural food is harder to find. Different species prefer different types of food too, so try to offer a varied 'menu'. You can find out what's suitable at www.rspb.org.uk/makeahomeforwildlife/advice/helpingbirds/feeding/whatfood.

Plan an ed-venture

If you enjoyed Tim and Kerry Meek's fantastic first book earlier this year, *100 Family Adventures*, you'll want to snap up a copy of their new family guide. The couple, who are teachers and have two daughters, have produced *Learning Outdoors with the Meek Family* as part of their mission to encourage families to spend more quality time together.

READ



Learning Outdoors shows that family time is just as important as formal education at school, and reveals how a range of fun weekend outings can be turned into an opportunity to learn too. From visiting a wind farm to taking a train journey, looking at sculpture in a local park or visiting a historic building, the Meeks have created 52 'ed-ventures', including suggestions for enhancing learning opportunities through reading, listening, visual, sensory and physical means.

So next time the children ask, 'What shall we do today?', you'll have the perfect resource to inspire you!

Learning Outdoors with the Meek Family is published by Frances Lincoln, £13.99.

Yoga for everyone

GO

The KaliCamp Yoga Festival on 12-13 September is a wellbeing event held at a private estate between Bath and Glastonbury. Designed for all the family, there will be opportunities to try activities such as a range of yoga practices, mindfulness workshops, archery, superfood workshops, spa therapies and supercharged five rhythms dancing, while children can enjoy yoga for kids, a mud slide, tree walking on slack ropes, mountain boarding, circus skills, pizza cooking, woodland den building, face painting and much more.



Ticket prices include camping and entry to all group activities and entertainment, plus Sunday breakfast and free parking. Find out more and buy tickets at www.kalicamp.co.uk.

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One for all

Whether all your children are veggies or just one, paediatric dietician Sara Ask and food writer Lisa Bjärbo have teamed up to create easy, delicious and nutritious meals that will satisfy the whole family.

Nut pasta with carrot

Super-quick, super-easy, and heavenly for those who aren't allergic to nuts. You can, of course, flavour the crème fraîche however you wish.

Serves 4 | Prep 5 mins | Cook 10 mins

60g hazelnuts (at least), coarsely chopped
 rapeseed oil, for frying
 1 onion, grated
 3 carrots, peeled and grated
 about 350g pasta, such as conchiglie
 1 tbsp tomato purée
 200ml crème fraîche
 a dash of milk for thinning the sauce (you might not need this)
 salt and freshly ground black pepper
 a sprig of basil


1 Toast the hazelnuts in a large frying pan for about a minute until just browned. Add the oil, onion and carrots and fry gently, until soft but not browned.

2 Meanwhile, cook the pasta according to the instructions on the packet. Drain.

3 Mix the tomato purée and crème fraîche, then turn the heat down and stir into the frying pan, making sure you do not allow it to boil. Dilute with a dash of milk, if needed, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Add the pasta and garnish with a sprig of basil.

■ PER SERVING 639 cals, fat 31.5g, sat fat 10.5g, carbs 75.5g, sugars 12g, protein 15g, salt 1.1g, fibre 7g

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 Choose egg-free pasta and replace the milk and crème fraîche with soya cream.

NUT PASTA WITH CARROT



NUTRITIOUS NUTS

In nuts and seeds, you'll find plenty of things that the body loves: healthy fatty acids, antioxidants, proteins, fibre, vitamins and minerals – even iron! So they are really good for you – as long as you are not one of the few who are allergic. Even small children will

benefit from eating nuts, but you must make sure the nuts are crushed into smaller pieces so that there is no risk of choking. And don't forget, of course, that adding different kinds of nuts and seeds is a tasty way to liven up mealtimes.

Fried rice with crispy curry tofu

This is a perfect dish to make when there's leftover rice in the fridge. Of course, you can make it from freshly cooked rice too, but the result is actually even better if it's made from day-old rice that's had time to dry out.

Serves 4 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 15 mins

rapeseed oil, for frying
200g white cabbage or sweetheart cabbage, shredded
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
55g mangetout, sliced
2 carrots, peeled and finely chopped
about 600g cooked long-grain rice, such as basmati
3 tbsp Japanese soy sauce, plus extra to serve
2 tsp sugar (optional)
2 free-range eggs, lightly beaten
2 tsp curry powder
1 pinch of salt
55g plain flour
55g panko breadcrumbs (or standard breadcrumbs)
300g firm tofu, sliced
handful of peanuts, chopped
5–6 spring onions, sliced
1 lime, cut into wedges

1 Heat the oil and stir-fry the cabbage, onion, garlic, mangetout and carrots for a few minutes on high until crisp.

2 Gradually stir in the rice and continue to stir-fry until everything is mixed and the rice is hot.

3 Mix the soy sauce and sugar and stir it into the pan.

4 Mix the eggs, curry powder and salt on a plate. Put the flour and panko on two other plates. Cut the tofu into 1cm slices and turn over first in flour, then in egg and finally in panko. Heat a generous amount of oil in a frying pan and fry the tofu until crisp and golden.

5 Top the rice with the tofu slices, sprinkle with peanuts and spring onions and serve with the lime wedges, some more chopped peanuts and soy sauce.

■ PER SERVING 566 cal, fat 19g, sat fat 3g, carbs 77.5g, sugars 9.5g, protein 22.5g, salt 3.5g, fibre 5.5g

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V Leave out the eggs. Cut the tofu into cubes and turn them over in a mixture of 55g cornflour, 1 tsp curry powder and a pinch of salt.

FRIED RICE WITH CRISPY CURRY TOFU



'We've created recipes for the food that we love to cook and eat with our own families: tasty vegetarian dishes that will appeal to the 3-year-old, the teenager, the parent and the sceptical elderly relative, all at the same time'

Taco burgers

A burger with taco flavour – the best of both worlds? The trickiest thing with vegetarian patties and burgers is to get them to hold together in the frying pan when you're flipping them over. You often find yourself standing by the cooker, cursing the mixture that breaks apart in front of your eyes as you see your perfectly formed patties turn into mulch. But these burgers are beautifully easy to handle.

Serves 4 | Prep 25 mins | Cook 5 mins

For the patties:

400g can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
4 tbsp taco spice mix (see below)
1 pinch of freshly ground black pepper
300g firm tofu, natural or marinated
1 cup crushed tortilla chips, preferably with a cheesy flavour
4 tbsp plain flour
rapeseed oil, for frying

To serve:

1 small clove garlic, crushed
200ml sour cream
4 hamburger rolls
1 red onion, sliced
1–2 avocados, peeled, pitted and sliced
1 red pepper, deseeded and sliced
115g sweetcorn
a few large lettuce or fresh spinach leaves

1 Mix the garlic and sour cream to make a dressing. (Or use a dollop of aioli or guacamole as a dressing instead – also delicious!)

2 Blend together the beans, taco spice mix and pepper – this is easiest if you use a hand-held mixer and a bowl. Mash up the tofu with a fork and stir into the paste – it's better if the paste isn't completely smooth.

3 Crush the tortilla chips, not too coarsely, and add half to the burger mixture with the flour. Divide the mixture into 4 patties and press together firmly so they hold their shape. Turn them over in the rest of the tortilla crumbs, as a coating.

4 Fry the burgers for a couple of minutes on each side in a generous splash of oil. Serve them in hamburger buns with the dressing and all the other toppings.

■ PER SERVING 858 cal, fat 37.5g, sat fat 10g, carbs 100g, sugars 14g, protein 29g, salt 3.7g, fibre 14g

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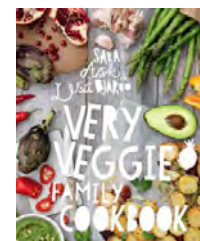
V Choose vegan-friendly tortilla chips. Use vegan sour cream or, if you can't get hold of any, a spoonful of classic taco salsa as dressing for the burger.



TACO BURGERS

TACO SPICE MIX

It's easy to make your own taco spice mix. Mix together 1 tbsp chilli powder, 1 tbsp onion powder, 1 tbsp ground cumin, 1 tsp paprika, 1 tsp dried oregano, 1 tsp sugar, 1 tsp salt and ½ tsp black pepper. Keep in a screw-top jar.



Adapted from *Very Veggie Family Cookbook* by Sara Ask and Lisa Bjarbo (Pavilion, £14.99). Recipe photography by Ulrika Pousette.



LET THEM EAT CAKE...

...but still get their five-a-day! Barbara Hopkins meets Kate Hackworthy to get a taste for her vegetable-based bakes that are a hit with all the family.

Award-winning food blogger Kate Hackworthy is, by her own admission, 'obsessed' with vegetables. At breakfast, lunch or dinner (and preferably at every meal), Kate's family, including her two children aged 5 and 3, are avid consumers of vegetables of every kind.

Winner of the Best Food Blog at the UK National Blog Awards and featured in Jamie Oliver's Food Blog of the Month last year, Kate's passion for and creativity with vegetables knows no bounds. Varied flavour combinations appear in cakes, biscuits, desserts and smoothies — and her children are completely unfazed by bright green cakes or purple biscuits!

So where did it all begin? Kate was raised

in Canada where her mum prepared fresh food 'from scratch' including homegrown vegetables, so healthy eating has always been a part of her life. When Kate's own son approached his first birthday she faced a common dilemma — the choice between providing healthy food or a birthday treat. After some experimentation, she found a solution by making a low-fat, low-sugar chocolate beetroot cake on one layer with chocolate butternut squash on the other, topped with avocado icing. This surprisingly delicious creation was the start of many more vegetable baking experiments to create not-so-guilty pleasures for her family, and the basis for her blog and budding career as a food writer.

Veg with everything

Kate's philosophy on a vegetable-rich diet for children is underpinned by helping them to understand where their food comes from. She finds that choosing vegetables, talking about how they grow and helping with preparation and cooking means her children are more inclined to try them, at the same time overcoming anxieties about unknown foods. She is a firm advocate of cooking with children, and stirring vegetables into a cake batter or dessert is another way of encouraging vegetable intake without hiding them. 'It's essential that healthy food doesn't become frightening or a battleground; you've got to make it fun and be open about the ingredients you are using.'



KALE AND ORANGE CUPCAKES
WITH ORANGE ICING



In Kate's household, vegetables are quite simply a normal and natural part of her children's daily lives. At their birthday parties, both adults and children cheerfully tuck into her creations, including spinach cake, beetroot biscuits and carrot balls.

Food waste is also a key consideration for Kate and she is determined to save as much as possible from the bin. 'My "root to stem" philosophy means that everything from roast dinner vegetable peelings, juicer pulp and foraged ingredients, such as nettles, all find their way into my recipes.'

Inspiration comes from many different sources, but she finds flavour combinations that work well in smoothies, soups and salads will usually work in a dessert too. Kate also considers what's in season, and from a practical perspective often tends to cook with whatever needs using up in her vegetable drawer. She admits that living in a market town with great fruit and vegetable stalls, outstanding farm shops and the award-winning Frome Assembly makes it easy to buy directly from local independent food producers and farmers. 'It's lovely to be able to pick up an enormous head of kale that was picked that morning or bags of muddy wonky carrots, and take them straight home to cook with,' she enthuses.

From carrot cookies to kale cakes

Kate loves to experiment with unusual combinations, and her kale and orange cupcakes came about after she'd made her morning green smoothie, in which she

discovered that orange masks the strong flavour of the kale. 'Puréeing the kale really thoroughly makes the cupcakes nice and green,' she says.

Swede and nutmeg are a delicious partnership and Kate decided to try them in a cake with a decadent brown butter frosting. 'To ensure that it wasn't too naughty, I made a sheet cake and gave each piece a little squirt of icing and then topped it with salted nuts. These flavours all work really well with the swede, so you can't even taste the veg!'

But perhaps best of all, her carrot jammy dodgers put a healthy spin on a famous mass-produced, but well-loved, biscuit, and were inspired simply because she happened to have a bag of carrots in the fridge to use up. 'They are easy to make: my kids loved rolling the dough and cutting out the shapes. And they certainly liked eating them - you can't taste the carrot at all!' she laughs.

This vegetable virtuoso is buzzing with plans and ideas to develop her blog and her blossoming food career, and she's recently ventured into teaching her techniques, giving a workshop on vegetable cake making at the renowned Demuths Vegetarian Cookery School in Bath.

So what's next on her to-do list? 'I would love to write a cookbook about my cakes and desserts,' she says. 'I have so many ideas to share. I'm always thinking about new vegetable dessert ideas: how to work asparagus into a pudding or what vegetable to put into a Bakewell tart - there are so many interesting and delicious possibilities!'

Discover more of Kate's sweet and savoury recipes at her blog www.veggiedesserts.co.uk.

For details about the Food Assembly, go to www.thefoodassembly.com.

KATE'S CAKES

Kale and orange cupcakes with orange icing

Makes 12 | Prep 20 mins | Cook 20 mins

For the cupcakes:

- 100g raw kale leaves, woody stalks discarded
- 150g unsalted butter, softened
- 150g granulated sugar
- 2 free-range eggs
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- zest and juice of 1 orange
- 200g plain flour
- 1½ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt

For the icing:

- 75g unsalted butter, softened
- 250g icing sugar
- 2-3 tbsp orange juice


- 1 Preheat the oven to 170C/fan 150C/gas 3. Line or grease a muffin tray.
- 2 Tear the kale leaves into bite-sized pieces and boil or steam for a few minutes, until tender. Refresh in cold water, drain and purée (it will still be a bit stringy). Set aside.



CARROT
JAMMY
DODGERS

- 3 In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar, until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, then beat in the kale, vanilla, orange juice and zest.
 - 4 Sift in the flour, baking powder and salt, then stir to gently combine.
 - 5 Fill the muffin cups three-quarters full with the batter and bake for 20 minutes, or until an inserted skewer comes out clean. Allow to cool in the tins for 10 minutes, then remove and allow to cool completely on a wire rack. Frost with the buttercream when cold.
 - 6 To make the icing, cream the butter in a large bowl, until fluffy. Sift in the icing sugar and beat until thick. Add enough orange juice to make it a frosting consistency. Store in the fridge until ready to use.
- PER CUPCAKE 348 cals, fat 16.5g, sat fat 10.5g, carbs 49.5g, sugars 36.5g, protein 3g, salt 0.7g, fibre 0.5g

freeze**me**

 Freeze unfrosted, in double layers of cling film, plus a layer of foil.

Carrot jammy dodgers

Makes 12 | Prep 20 mins + chilling
Cook 10 mins

100g carrot (raw)
200g unsalted butter, softened
125g icing sugar, plus extra for dusting
2 free-range eggs, yolks only
1 tsp vanilla extract
300g plain flour
apricot jam, to serve

- 1 Peel and grate the carrot. Set aside.
- 2 Cream the butter and icing sugar together, until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg yolks and vanilla.
- 3 Mix in the grated carrot and flour until it forms a soft dough. Wrap in cling film and chill in the fridge for at least 1 hour.
- 4 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Line a large baking tray with baking parchment.
- 5 Roll the dough out on to a lightly floured surface to about 5mm thick. Cut out rounds with an 8cm cutter. For half of the rounds, cut another, smaller, shape in the middle to form a window. Re-roll any trimmings and make an equal amount of plain and windowed biscuits.
- 6 Place the biscuits on the baking tray and bake for 10 minutes, then allow to cool on the tray.

'The jammy dodgers are easy to make: my kids loved rolling the dough and cutting out the shapes. And they certainly liked eating them – you can't taste the carrot at all!'

7 Sandwich a dollop of jam between the plain and windowed biscuits, and dust with sieved icing sugar.

■ PER BISCUIT 297 cals, fat 15g, sat fat 9.5g, carbs 39.5g, sugars 20g, protein 3g, salt 0.4g, fibre 1.5g

freeze^{me}

* The cookie dough can be frozen prior to rolling and cooking.

Swede and nutmeg cake with brown butter icing and salted hazelnuts *

Serves 16 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 30 mins

For the cake:

3 free-range eggs
175g granulated sugar
100g plain full-fat yogurt
100ml rapeseed or vegetable oil
2 tsp vanilla extract
150g swede (raw), peeled and grated
250g plain flour
2 tsp baking powder
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
2 tsp ground nutmeg
½ tsp salt

For the brown butter frosting:

400g icing sugar
2 tsp vanilla extract
3–4 tbsp milk
115g unsalted butter, at room temperature

To serve:

30g salted hazelnuts, chopped

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Grease and line a 23cm square cake tin with baking parchment.

2 Beat together the eggs, sugar, yogurt, oil and vanilla until well combined. Stir in the grated swede.



SWEDE AND NUTMEG CAKE WITH BROWN BUTTER ICING AND SALTED HAZELNUTS

3 Sift in the flour, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, nutmeg and salt, then gently stir to combine.

4 Pour into the prepared tin and bake for 25–30 minutes, or until an inserted skewer comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes in the tin, then turn out on to a wire rack and remove the paper. Allow to cool completely.

5 Put the icing sugar, vanilla and 1 tablespoon of the milk into a large bowl. Set aside. In a saucepan over a low heat, melt the butter and continue

to heat until it turns brown and smells nutty. Pour into the bowl of icing sugar and beat until thick and smooth, adding more milk if necessary.

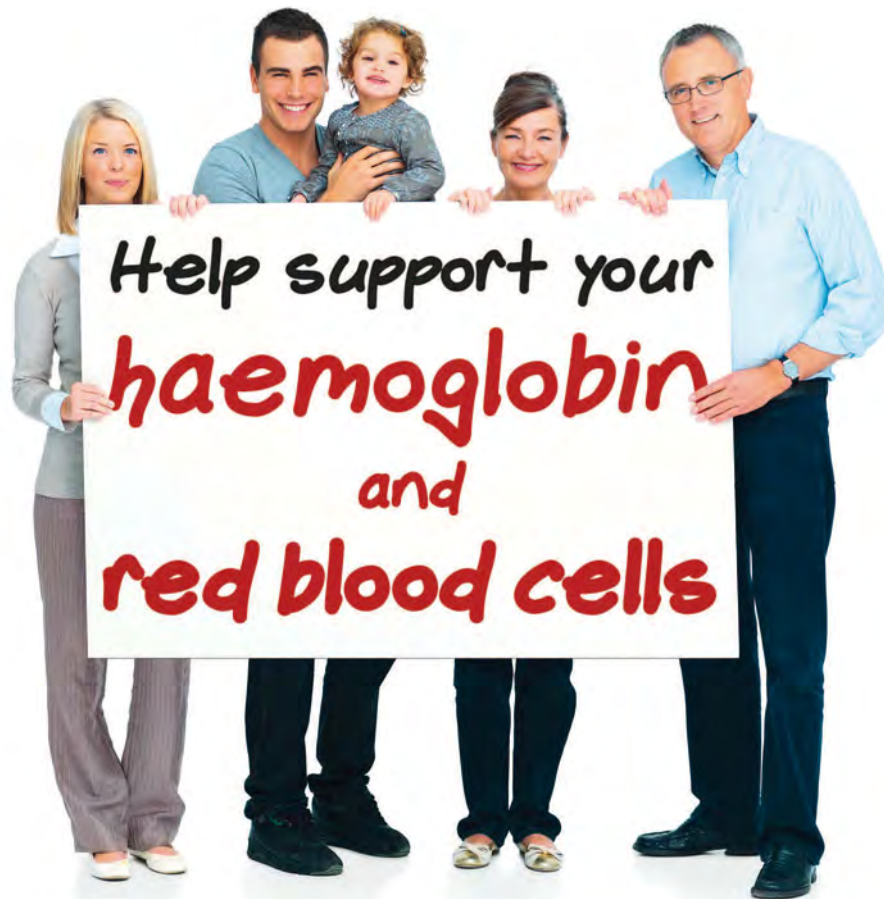
6 Top the cooled cake with the frosting and sprinkle with the chopped hazelnuts.

■ PER SERVING 347 cals, fat 15.5g, sat fat 5g, carbs 51g, sugars 39g, protein 3.5g, salt 0.6g, fibre 1.5g

freeze^{me}

* Freeze unfrosted, in double layers of cling film, plus a layer of foil.

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* (IRI value data, 52 w/e 6th Sept, 2014).



Sisters Nina and Jo Littler along with their friend Randi Glenn founded a business making meals that contain all your five-a-day in one dish. Here they share some of their favourites, all packed with colourful, nutritious veggies and bags of flavour!



Gimme five!

‘The five-a-day message is drummed into us daily – by the media, at the doctor’s surgery, or as we wander down the supermarket aisle – but we still fall short of the target. Why?’ asks Nina Littler. ‘It’s not that we lack good intentions. In fact, in the most recent recorded year we threw away more than 12 billion portions of fruit and vegetables! Research tells us there are two simple reasons. First, preparing vegetables that the family all like with every meal can be time-consuming. Second, most of us just don’t find vegetables interesting enough. But with our creative recipe ideas, vegetables never need to be a plain or boring afterthought again.’

Goan aubergine curry with coconut and tamarind V *

A tangy, mildly spiced curry with ginger and coconut.

Serves 2 | Prep 10 mins | Cook 40 mins

For the paste:

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
2 tsp finely chopped root ginger
1 green chilli, finely chopped
4 black peppercorns
2 tsp ground coriander
2 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp fennel seeds
1 tsp ground turmeric

For the vegetables:

2 tbsp vegetable oil, plus more if needed
1 cinnamon stick
2 bay leaves

1 medium onion, finely chopped (160g)
2–3 large tomatoes, chopped (160g)
160g sweet potato, cut into bite-sized pieces
small aubergine, cut into bite-sized pieces (160g)
40g fresh grated coconut (or frozen/desiccated coconut), plus more to taste (optional)
300ml vegetable stock
handful of green beans, halved (80g)
80g frozen peas, defrosted
sea salt
½ tsp tamarind paste
large handful of coriander, finely chopped

1 To make the paste, blend all the ingredients with 2 tablespoons of water in a small blender (or use a mortar and pestle instead).



GOAN AUBERGINE CURRY WITH COCONUT AND TAMARIND

2 Heat the oil in a heavy-based saucepan and fry the cinnamon stick and bay leaves for a minute or so. Add the onion and cook for about 8 minutes until golden brown. Then add the curry paste – you may need to add a little more oil. Fry the curry paste for 5 minutes, then add the tomatoes followed by the sweet potato and aubergine.

3 Add the coconut and pour in the stock. Cover and cook for 25 minutes, until the vegetables are tender, adding the green beans for the final 10 minutes.

4 Add the peas and a little more water or coconut depending on how thick you like your curry.

5 Take out the cinnamon stick and bay leaves. Taste and season with salt and the tamarind, then scatter over the coriander to serve.

■ PER SERVING 475 cals, fat 27g, sat fat 12.5g, carbs 41g, sugars 17.5g, protein 11.5g, salt 2g, fibre 16.5g

Malaysian laksa with courgette 'noodles' ✔

This light, colourful and mildly spiced soup introduces the idea of courgette 'noodles'. To create a more substantial dish, simply add your preferred type of regular noodles.

Serves 2 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 30 mins

160g sweet potato, cut into 1cm cubes
 2 tbsp sunflower oil
 1 medium onion, finely chopped (160g)
 2 kaffir lime leaves, very finely chopped
 1 lemon grass stalk, bruised
 2 tbsp Madras curry paste
 1 tsp Thai red curry paste
 80g chestnut mushrooms, cut into bite-sized pieces
 handful of broccoli florets, stem peeled and cut into bite-sized pieces (80g)
 400ml can coconut milk
 300ml vegetable stock

handful of sugar snap peas, cut into bite-sized pieces (80g)

1 small head of pak choi, chopped (80g)

1 courgette, made into noodles with a spiralizer or julienner (160g)

1 tsp sesame oil

large handful of chopped coriander
 sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

To serve:

small handful of beansprouts

½ red chilli, finely chopped
 lime wedges

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Spread the sweet potato on a baking sheet, toss in 1 tablespoon of the oil and roast for 20 minutes or until just cooked (this helps to improve its flavour).

2 Fry the onion, kaffir lime leaves and lemon grass with the two curry pastes in the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil for a few minutes, adding a little water to ensure the pastes don't burn. When the onion is soft, add the mushrooms and broccoli stems and fry for a few more minutes.

3 Add the coconut milk and stock, and simmer for about 20 minutes. Once the flavours have infused, add the broccoli florets, sugar snap peas and pak choi, and continue to cook until just tender but still retaining a firm bite. Lastly, add the sweet potato and courgette noodles and cook for a final 2 minutes before adding the sesame oil and coriander.

4 Season to taste and serve in bowls topped with crunchy beansprouts, red chilli and lime wedges.

COOK'S TIP It's worth investing in a hand-held julienner or spiralizer, as it will come in handy for all types of dishes. It will transform the appearance of your vegetables and give them a real 'wow' factor.

■ PER SERVING 890 cals, fat 71g, sat fat 32.5g, carbs 42.5g, sugars 23g, protein 17g, salt 2.1g, fibre 11g

govegan

✔ It's best to check carefully that your Thai paste doesn't contain fish.

Mean balls with tomato sauce ✔

These spicy veggie mean balls look just like traditional meat balls. Served with a wholesome tomato sauce, this is a perfect way to give the kids their five-a-day.

Serves 4 kids

Prep 15 mins + chilling

Cook 1 hr



MALAYSIAN LAKSA WITH COURGETTE 'NOODLES'



MEAN BALLS
WITH TOMATO
SAUCE

For the mean balls:

- 1 tbsp sunflower oil, plus more to fry
- 1 small red onion, finely chopped (80g)
- 1 small carrot, coarsely grated (80g)
- 80g mushrooms, finely chopped
- 400g can borlotti beans, drained and rinsed (net weight 240g)
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp mustard
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp finely chopped rosemary
- 4 tbsp oats

For the tomato sauce:

- 1 tbsp sunflower oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped (80g)
- 1 small courgette, finely chopped (80g)

- ½ red pepper, finely chopped (80g)
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

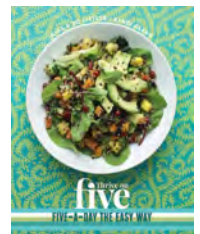
- 1** Heat the oil in a frying pan and sauté the onion, carrot and mushrooms for about 10 minutes until soft.
- 2** Meanwhile, pat the drained borlotti beans dry with kitchen paper. Put the beans and everything else for the mean balls into a food processor (not the contents of the frying pan just yet, though) and pulse-blend until you have a coarse mixture.
- 3** Empty into a bowl and stir in the cooked onion, carrot and mushroom mixture. Form into 12-16 balls and

place in the fridge for 20 minutes.

4 Meanwhile, make the tomato sauce. Heat the oil in a pan and add the onion, courgette, pepper and garlic. Cook for 7-10 minutes until softened. Add the tomatoes with 100ml water and a pinch of salt and pepper. Cook over a medium heat for 30 minutes, adding extra water only if necessary. Leave to cool for a few minutes, then blend until smooth.

5 Heat some oil in a non-stick frying pan, add the mean balls and fry for 8 minutes over a medium heat, turning halfway through. Serve with the tomato sauce and some pasta.

■ PER SERVING 279 cals, fat 13.5g, sat fat 1.5g, carbs 28.5g, sugars 9g, protein 8.5g, salt 1.5g, fibre 8g



Recipes adapted from *Thrive on Five* by Nina and Jo Littler and Randi Glenn (Quadrille, £16.99). Photography by Dan Jones. www.thrivefive.co.uk

FROM PLOT TO PLATE

GET SOWING, GROWING AND EATING FROM YOUR OWN VEG PATCH, WITH ALICE WHITEHEAD



With a green-fingered father and grandfather, it was inevitable that allotmenteer **Alice Whitehead** would follow in their muddy boot-prints. She has been growing her own and writing about it for more than 10 years.

Out & about

YOUR GUIDE TO EVENTS OF INTEREST THIS COMING MONTH

16 September

Design a Garden for Wildlife

Find out how to incorporate natural and wild features into even the most contemporary/urban setting in this one-day course in York.

www.stillingfleetlodgenurseries.co.uk

19 September

Introduction to Spiders

Find out more about the 660 British spider species with Dr Geoff Oxford from the University of York, with a hands-on session of collection and identification.

www.stnicks.org.uk

28 September

Behind the Scenes at Great Dixter

Learn more about gardening in the shade, autumn propagation and composting, in this practical workshop based at one of the UK's best-loved gardens.

www.greatdixter.co.uk



STEP-BY-STEP

Make your own apple juice

There's little that can beat the taste of homemade apple juice, so turn a glut into a goldmine, with a spot of home juicing.

- All varieties of apple can be used for juicing, but it's best to use a combination of sharp cooking apples and eating apples to give a balanced flavour. Wash, core and cut them up - check for pests and disease and discard those that look unpalatable!
- Even a dwarf tree will provide some 4-8 litres of juice over the season, and as a rule of thumb a shopping bag of apples will give you roughly 1 litre of apple juice.
- You'll need to crush your harvest into small pieces (this is called the pomace). Most apple presses will come with a 'scratter', which crushes them for you - but if you don't have one, you can freeze the apple pieces and pound them with a wooden pest in a bucket.
- Next, press your pomace. If you're planning for a few bottles, a kitchen juicer will do the job, but if you have a big harvest (and want to make more than 50 litres) you'll need to invest in an apple press.
- Ensure you sterilise bottles before filling, and drink the juice within 2-3 days, or freeze for later.

BUY IT

Go for a cheap and cheerful stainless-steel presser (around £100 at Amazon or www.the-home-brew-shop.co.uk), or a pretty and practical crossbeam fruit press with beach staves and winding handle (www.harrodhorticultural.com; www.henandhammock.co.uk).

TOP TIPS

Keep tasting the juice as you press, so you can be sure you've got the flavour right - and add in more cookers or eaters depending on your taste. If pressing, you can compost the dry pomace or freeze it to use in baking.

DIG IN

Try adding your 'home brew' to cocktails. Fill a glass with ice and pour in 25ml gin and 25ml elderflower cordial, then top up with apple juice; or add cinnamon sticks, cloves and a shot of Drambuie to your juice and heat gently before serving.

THINGS TO DO NOW...

HARVEST HERBS

Now's a good time to give perennial and annual herbs a haircut, and save the fresh cuttings for use later in the year. Either freeze in ice cube trays or air-dry, crush and store in airtight containers. Choose a dry day and use sharp scissors.

SOW AUTUMN SALADS

Succession sow salad leaves such as Chinese mustard, wild rocket, American land cress, mizuna and pak choi through September for pickings through winter. Snip off the tops for cut-and-come-again cropping, and protect rows with fleece when the first frosts are forecast.

THINK ABOUT BIRDS

Help garden birds prepare for winter by cleaning out birdbaths and filling them regularly with clean water - September can still be hot and dry! Keep bird feeders topped up and don't be too quick to cut down old flower and grass seed heads, as birds find them very tasty.

PLANT NEW STRAWBERRIES

September is the perfect time to plant new strawberries, either from your own runners (the little baby plants on long stalks) or new plants. Strawberry patches need renewing every 3-4 years, so it pays to replenish old stocks with new plants for continued bumper harvests.

Trade secrets

SOWING A MEADOW

Paul Cook, curator of RHS Harlow Carr, North Yorkshire (www.rhs.org.uk/harlowcarr), gives his tips on sowing and growing a meadow.

September is the perfect time to add meadow planting into your garden, as many perennial meadow plants germinate and establish themselves during the cooler autumn months, ready to flower the following year.

CLEAR GRASS AND WEEDS

The biggest obstacle to creating a successful meadow is controlling competitive plants, including grass and garden weeds such as docks and nettles. They can overpower the meadow plants in the early stages of growth, so the first thing to ensure is that the area is free from these competing plants.

CHOOSE YOUR PLANTS

There is plenty of advice on the RHS website (www.rhs.org.uk) or from the online catalogues of wild-flower suppliers. Seed is the most cost-effective way to start a meadow, but ready-grown plug plants or wild-flower turf are good alternatives. At RHS Harlow Carr we use yellow rattle in our perennial meadows, which is semi-parasitic on grass and controls its vigour. This allows the wild flowers to rise above any grass and have their flowering heads in the sun.

TENDING THE MEADOW

The first month is crucial in

establishing a good meadow. Water in dry spells and look out for any rogue weeds that will germinate and dominate the meadow. Then sit back and wait until the following spring.

FOR QUICK RESULTS...

We have annual meadows around the garden at Harlow Carr that provide instant colour and are a nectar larder for insects. The more flowers we have in our gardens the more food we are supplying for pollinating insects – within a year of introducing pollinator-friendly meadows you will see an increase in bees, butterflies and other wildlife.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF RHS

ESSENTIAL TIPS AND ADVICE FROM THE PEOPLE IN THE KNOW!



VEG LIVING LOVES

MINI GREENHOUSE

This gorgeous galvanised steel and glass greenhouse – part of a ‘Thoughtful Gardener’ range of funky garden gifts and accessories (£34.95) – makes the perfect windowsill terrarium for late sowings of summer herbs, and is the perfect size for children to have a first go at sowing some seeds. What’s more, the top lifts off the bottom tray so it can also be used as a pretty cloche for tender vegetables in the garden, when it’s not being used indoors.

www.amara.com

To sow this month Spring cabbages, lettuces, overwintering onion sets, oriental leaves, spinach, radishes, rocket, salad leaves and spring onions.

BIG IDEAS FOR LITTLE PLOTS

Portable hanging planter

Hung with produce or pretty flowers, this nifty lean-to trellis can be moved around the garden to brighten up bare patches.

YOU WILL NEED

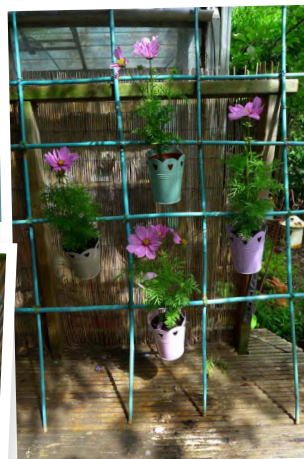
- sturdy canes, willow branches or metal rods
- garden wire or string
- small pot of outdoor paint
- pretty plant pots/buckets with holes in the top
- small late-summer flowers, herbs or salad veg

- 1 Lay your canes or rods on the ground in a grid pattern and secure them together tightly with string or garden wire. They’ll need to be really tight to ensure they stay together. If in doubt, you could drill holes through the rear horizontal rods and tie the two together.
- 2 Once you’ve constructed your grid, paint it a bright



colour to contrast with your pots and wait for it to dry. Lean it against a wall or fence, ideally with the feet in soil or grass so it can stand firm.

- 3 Fill your pots with a little compost mixed with some water-retaining gel and water. Once they’ve soaked up the water, pot up your plants. Don’t go for anything too heavy (pot or plant) as it could make the trellis slip.



- 4 If you’re using pots rather than buckets, make handles for them by securing wire to one end of the pot, looping it through your trellis and then back out the other side of the pot, so they can hang off the horizontal canes.
- 5 Place the plants at different levels for maximum impact, and at night-time, you could even hang up a few pretty tea-light holders.



NATURAL CROP PROTECTION

HOMEMADE REMEDIES TO DEAL WITH SEASONAL PESTS...

The larvae of the recently discovered allium leaf-miner fly and leek moth will munch away at your onions, shallots and leeks, so cover the crop with fleece, particularly if you live in southern England where they are more prevalent, and pick off the caterpillar cocoons by hand. Ensure good crop rotation too.



MINI MAKES

Butterfly banquet

There are still plenty of butterflies to spot in September, so encourage them into your garden with a butterfly-friendly feeder. As the days shorten and food sources become scarce, it's just the right time to give them a helping hand.

YOU WILL NEED

- thin plastic plate
- tape measure
- hole punch
- brightly coloured string/twine
- assorted beads

butterfly food: really ripe, sliced fruits such as orange and strawberry or mashed banana



- 1** Punch 4 holes on opposite sides of your plastic plate with a hole punch. Use a tape measure to make sure they are evenly spaced, otherwise the plate will be lopsided!
- 2** Loop your string or twine through the holes and tie a big knot into each end, so the string doesn't fall back through the hole.
- 3** Add pretty beads on to your string – the butterflies will be attracted to the bright colours – leaving a little bit of string free at each end. Tie the ends together and hang in a tree above some flowers, where the food won't dry out or be eaten by other pests, but you can still see it.
- 4** Place your ripe fruit on to the plate – it's a great way to get rid of old scraps from the kitchen – and if the fruit dries out, add a sprinkling of fruit juice. Always replace the food when it gets mouldy.
- 5** Watch for butterflies on a sunny day and keep a photo diary of what you see!

GREEN CITY EVENTS



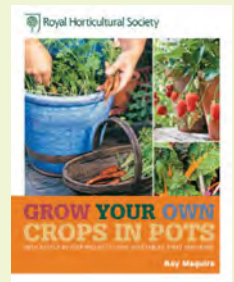
The Green City social enterprise in Cardiff is passionate about getting communities growing green spaces in the city, with workshops on everything from earth oven-building and bug hunts to making your own mead. During September, you can join a wild food forage in Bute Park and learn more about scavenging safely, or have a go at preserving your own produce, with a practical workshop on saving herbs, fruit and



veg and turning them into flavoured butters, cordials, pickles and preserves – along with some tasty inspiration from local producers!
www.greencityevents.co.uk

ARMCHAIR GARDENER

Small is beautiful – and bountiful – with *RHS Grow Your Own Crops in Pots* by Kay Maguire. This handy guide shows you how to turn the tiniest space into a productive plot with 30 tried-and-tested container recipes for salads, fruits, herbs and edible flowers, as well as tasty photography (Mitchell Beazley, £16.99).



4 WAYS TO...

Brew your own fertiliser

NETTLE TONIC It may be the scourge of your plot, but these stingers make a fabulous nitrogen-rich fertiliser for established brassicas and leafy greens. Pick young leaves and crush inside a container, covering with water. Leave to brew for 3 weeks, then dilute at a rate of 1 part nettle to 10 parts water.

COMPOST TEA This black liquid gold is a homegrown Miracle Gro and can be used as a foliage and root feed for fruiting vegetables every 2 weeks. Add 2 spades of well-rotted compost (the stuff at the bottom of your heap) to a large bucket, and fill with rainwater. Seal and stir regularly over 3 weeks, before straining off.

SEAWEED SOLUTION Stock up on fresh seaweed at the beach, rinsing off the salt and sand. Put in a bucket, fill with water, then cover with a lid. Stir now and again over 3 weeks, then strain and dilute (1:10 as above).



COMFREY CONCOCTION The hairy leaves of comfrey make a potassium-rich fertiliser that's a perfect 'pick-me-up' for plants. Harvest from the base of the plant and pop into a container, weighing down with a stone. Cover with 10 litres of water and seal (it will smell, but the pong means it's working). As the leaves break down they'll release a brown liquid, which you collect. Add fresh leaves on top as the pile decomposes, and dilute your liquid (1:10 as above) before using.

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HEALTHY LIVING

Spiralize fresh, raw seasonal veggies for a substantial salad with a twist.

Cucumber noodle salad with fennel, chard and quinoa

This super-healthy salad is served with a punchy mint and pea dressing which gives the dish a real zing. The addition of protein-packed quinoa to the ingredients gives it bite, and turns it into a satisfying and filling lunch.

Serves 1 | Prep 10 mins | Cook 10 mins

For the dressing:

150g peas
1 large handful of spinach leaves
1 bunch of mint leaves
3 tbsp apple cider vinegar
3 tbsp olive oil
juice of 1 lime
1 tbsp tamari
1 tsp maple syrup

For the salad:

25g quinoa
½ cucumber
¼ fennel bulb, finely sliced
3 radishes, finely sliced
1 spring onion, finely sliced
2 tbsp sesame seeds
1 handful of chard leaves

1 First prepare the dressing: place all of the ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth.

2 Put the quinoa in a bowl and pour over enough cold water to cover, then leave to soak for a couple of minutes. Put 100ml water in a pan and bring to the boil. Add the



quinoa and cook on a gentle simmer for 10 minutes, until it has softened and absorbed the water. Drain and set aside to cool.

3 Spiralize the cucumber using a medium blade (or use a julienne peeler), then place the noodles in a serving dish. Add the remaining ingredients and toss everything together by hand.

4 Dress the salad with a couple of spoonfuls

of the dressing (you will have plenty left over to use on other dishes) and scatter over the cooled quinoa. Serve.

■ PER SERVING 384 cals, fat 26g, sat fat 4g, carbs 20g, sugars 6g, protein 14g, salt 0.6g, fibre 8g

Recipe adapted from *Spiralize!* by Stephanie Jeffs (Pavilion, £12.99). Photography by Tony Briscoe.

Mindful meals

As a ballerina-in-training, Saskia Gregson-Williams suffered from constant ill health and injuries until she discovered a new, natural way of eating, cutting out meat, dairy, gluten and refined sugars. Following on from the success of her Naturally Sassy blog, this 17-year-old athlete and businesswoman has now launched her first cookbook.

Moroccan root tagine and cauliflower couscous V

Serves 4 | Prep 20 mins | Cook 30 mins

For the Moroccan root tagine:

2 medium-sized sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into small cubes

2 carrots, peeled and cut into small chunks

1 medium-sized butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and cut into small cubes

2 tbsp olive oil

salt

For the tomato sauce:

1-2 tbsp olive oil

1 large red onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

1 tsp peeled and finely chopped fresh root ginger

1 tbsp turmeric

2 tsp ground cinnamon

3 Medjool dates, pitted and chopped

2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes

For the cauliflower couscous:

80g raw pistachio kernels

1 large cauliflower, trimmed and cut into florets

seeds from ½ pomegranate

juice of 1 lemon

sprig of parsley, finely chopped, plus extra to garnish

1 Preheat the oven to 190C/fan 170C/gas 5.

For the tagine, place the root vegetables and squash into a roasting tin, drizzle over the olive oil and add a pinch of salt. Pop in the oven to roast for around 30 minutes or until the vegetables are tender.

2 Spread the pistachios for the cauliflower couscous on a baking tray, place in the oven and toast for around 7 minutes, shaking the pan from time to time to ensure they don't burn, then remove from the oven and set aside.

3 Meanwhile, make the tomato sauce. Add the olive oil to a pan, followed by the onion, garlic and ginger, and fry over a medium-high heat for 2 minutes. Add the spices, dates, tinned tomatoes and a generous pinch of salt and bring to the boil. Reduce to a slightly lower heat and cook for a further 2-3 minutes, then remove from the heat and set aside.

4 Next place the cauliflower florets into a blender or food processor and pulse until the consistency of couscous or rice. (Alternatively, you can use a grater to grate the cauliflower.)

5 Transfer the 'couscous' to a bowl. If you wish to eat it raw, now is the time to add all the other ingredients, plus a pinch of salt. If you would prefer to heat it, add 1 tablespoon of olive oil to a pan and sauté the cauliflower in the lemon juice before mixing in the other ingredients.

6 Once the root vegetables and squash have finished cooking, remove from the oven and add to the tomato sauce in the pan, heating through for 5 minutes until piping hot. Serve with the cauliflower couscous, garnished with fresh parsley.

COOK'S TIP The smaller the pieces of root vegetables and squash, the more quickly they'll roast. Chop, chop!

■ PER SERVING 417 cals, fat 18.5g, sat fat 2.5g, carbs 49g, sugars 29.5g, protein 11.5g, salt 1.5g, fibre 12g



Saskia says...

Cauliflower couscous doesn't appeal? Or you simply can't be bothered to grate it? That's absolutely fine - we all have those days! Why not try using quinoa in its place? This recipe serves 4, so you'll need 250g quinoa - boil in 700ml lightly salted water for 15-20 minutes or until fluffy, before mixing with the other ingredients.



Brown rice pizza with a sundried tomato sauce V

Serves 3 | Prep 20 mins | Cook 40 mins

For the base:

220g brown rice flour
3 tbsp arrowroot
½ tbsp sea salt
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
20g roughly chopped parsley
350ml warm water
60ml olive oil
1 tbsp apple cider vinegar

For the sundried tomato sauce:

60g sundried tomatoes
2 tbsp olive oil
60ml passata
½ clove garlic, peeled and crushed

For the toppings:

1 medium-sized squash, peeled, deseeded and cut into small cubes
1-2 tbsp olive oil
pinch of salt
150g sliced white mushrooms
2 sweet peppers (any colour), deseeded and sliced
handful of fresh basil, roughly shredded
30g pine nuts
50g pitted black olives
handful of rocket, to garnish

1 Preheat the oven to 190C/fan 170C/gas 5 and line a 30cm pizza tray or a baking sheet with baking parchment. Place the squash in a roasting tin, drizzle over the olive oil and add a pinch of salt. Pop in the oven to roast for 30 minutes or until tender.

2 Meanwhile, place all the ingredients for the pizza base in a mixing bowl and mix until fully combined. Scoop the dough out on to the prepared pizza tray/baking sheet and, with wet hands, flatten it out and mould into your pizza shape. You want a very thin crust, so it's best to spread the dough out as much as possible. Place in the oven and bake for 20 minutes until golden.

3 While the pizza base is cooking, place all the ingredients for the sundried tomato sauce into a blender and blend until smooth.

4 Remove the pizza from the oven and top with the sundried tomato sauce, mushrooms, peppers, basil, pine nuts and black olives. Cook for a further 10 minutes and serve, with the squash cubes scattered on top and garnished with rocket leaves.

■ PER SERVING 722 cals, fat 39g, sat fat 6g, carbs 92g, sugars 5g, protein 6.5g, salt 2g, fibre 3g



'My philosophy is to eat only unrefined, plant-based, natural food that does your body nothing but good'

Caramel mousse with a raw chocolate ganache

Despite being made from completely natural ingredients, this is one of the most indulgent desserts I have ever tasted. The base consists of a fudge brownie, with a hint of sweet pecan and a subtle caramel overtone from the Medjool dates. The middle is like a caramel mousse with hints of cinnamon and coconut. To top it all is a layer of raw chocolate ganache – sheer heaven!

Makes 2 mousses | Prep 20 mins

For the base:

115g pecans
3 tbsp raw cacao (or cocoa) powder
90g Medjool dates, pitted
pinch of salt

For the caramel layer:

125g cashew butter
45g Medjool dates, pitted and chopped
2 tbsp coconut oil, melted
1 tbsp raw honey, agave or pure maple syrup
½ tsp ground cinnamon
60–120ml water (start with less and add more if needed)

For the raw chocolate ganache:

2 generous tbsp coconut oil, melted
30g raw cacao (or cocoa) powder
80ml agave or maple syrup


1 Make the base by adding the pecans and cacao (or cocoa) powder to a food processor and process into a fine flour, then add the dates and salt and blend again until it becomes a sticky dough. Divide the dough in two and press into the bottom of a glass or jar.

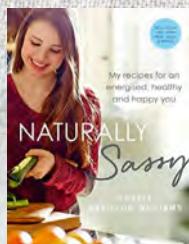
2 Make the caramel layer by adding all ingredients to a blender and blending until smooth. Pour on top of the base in each glass or jar.

3 To make the chocolate ganache, mix all the ingredients until smooth, then pour the chocolate on top of the caramel layer and place in the fridge to chill until you are ready to serve.

■ PER MOUSSE 1,430 cals, fat 105.5g, sat fat 30g, carbs 90g, sugars 83g, protein 27.5g, salt 2.2g, fibre 17.5g

govegan

 Choose agave or maple syrup over honey when making the caramel layer.



Recipes adapted from *Naturally Sassy* by Saskia Gregson-Williams (Ebury Press, £16.99). Photography by Matt Russell.



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

People regularly get confused when looking for organic or natural beauty products, which isn't surprising as currently there is no legislation in place to define how those terms are applied. Some companies make a big point of flagging up organic or natural ingredients, but these may make up a tiny percentage of a product, which could also contain high levels of synthetic ingredients.

If it is important to you that a product is as natural as possible, then look for a certification mark on the packaging. There are a number of different certifying bodies, so these will vary, as can their criteria. However, certification does provide an assurance that a manufacturer's organic or natural claims have been verified by an external organisation - this could be the Soil Association in the UK (the organisation behind Organic Beauty Week, 8-14 September) or an international certifier like Ecocert.

But you shouldn't just dismiss everything without a certification, if you are prepared to do some research, work out what ingredients you are keen to avoid and check ingredients. There are many companies producing good quality natural and organic products that aren't certified for a number of reasons, as Natalie Balmond, founder of PurePotions (www.purepotions.co.uk) explains: 'The cost of certification can be prohibitive for small businesses and our hero product, Skin Salvation Moisturising Ointment, along with some others, doesn't qualify for organic certification because it contains non-organic beeswax. However, organic beeswax is only available from overseas and we are keen to support local trade and minimise our carbon footprint.'



Natalie Balmond



GO ORGANIC

BY SARA NIVEN SMITH, BEAUTY EDITOR



It's Organic Beauty Week this month, so we're stocking up on natural skincare products.

3 OF THE BEST ORGANIC BODY OILS



Many cheaper body oils are made from mineral oil (listed as 'paraffinum liquidum' on the label), which is derived from petroleum jelly and can irritate some skins. Try a natural oil product which is far more nourishing.

Neal's Yard Remedies Base Massage Oil (£6.50/100ml)
A blend of sweet almond, wheatgerm and organic sunflower oils, this fragrance-free oil provides the option of adding your own essential oils. The new Jasmine & Ylang Ylang Body Oil (£18.90) is also worth a mention, for a more indulgent treat.

www.nealsyardremedies.com

Botanicals Organic Muscle Ease (£12.50/50ml)
A great gift for a regular gym user or anyone with a physically demanding job, this warming infusion of sandalwood, black pepper and frankincense is blended to help relieve sore muscles and soothe aching joints, and would make a good massage oil for men or women.

www.botanicals.co.uk

Spiezia Organic Body Softening Oil (£23.95/100ml)
Scented with the uplifting fragrance of mandarin and geranium oils, this indulgent body treat contains sesame, jojoba and sweet almond oil, and is particularly good for dry skin.

www.spieziaorganics.com



1 Living Nature's new Sensitive skin range includes soap-free cleanser, toner, day moisturiser and night cream. All are based on organic coconut oil and harakeke flax extract which has hydrating and soothing properties. We love the toner, a light cream that's perfect for sensitive skin. *Cleanser and toner £21.50, moisturisers £26.50; certified natural by BDIH Germany.* www.botanicalbrands.com

OUR PICK
NATURAL BEAUTY PRODUCTS



3 Weleda's new Almond Body Collection for Sensitive Skin is a lovely yet reasonably priced natural range. The products are vegan-friendly (except the body lotion which contains organic beeswax) and all are made with cold-pressed almond oil from organic crops. *Body lotion £13.95, body wash £7.95 and hand cream £9.95; NATRUE certified.* www.weleda.co.uk

CHECK IT OUT
If you're a fan of online shopping, take a look at Biteable Beauty, a brand-new website specialising in natural and organic beauty products. www.biteablebeauty.com



2 Antipodes Worship Superfruit Antioxidant Serum contains antioxidant ingredients including New Zealand grape seeds, blackcurrants and boysenberries to tackle the ageing effects of free-radical damage. *£33.99; certified organic by BIO-Gro and Vegetarian Society approved.* www.antipodesnature.com



4 Trilogy Rosehip Oil Antioxidant+ is already an award-winning product, but it's now available in a new limited edition 15ml bottle. Containing the antioxidant complex Rosapene, this facial beauty oil absorbs quickly into the skin to nourish and improve elasticity. *£13.25; certified by NATRUE and available from Debenhams and www.lookfantastic.com.*



5 If you want a product that works hard for the money, this is it. Jason Smoothing Coconut Oil is an unrefined, unbleached virgin coconut oil, and can be used as a moisturiser, make-up remover, lip balm, hair conditioner or hand cream. *£11.99; certified organic by USDA.* www.jasonnaturalcare.co.uk

ASK THE BEAUTY EDITOR

I'm keen to switch to more natural beauty products, but most seem beyond my budget. Can you suggest any less expensive options?

It is true some organic ranges can be pricier than those relying on cheaper, synthetic ingredients – some considerably more so. However, the Soil Association-certified Balm Balm range (www.balmbalm.com) comes highly recommended with individual products starting at just £3.50

and going up to £15.50. Check out Faith in Nature (www.faithinnature.co.uk) too. Their products aren't certified but are free from parabens and sodium lauryl sulphate, predominantly vegan-friendly and many are priced at around the £6 mark.

Also look out for 'cottage industry' beauty companies selling their own formulations at craft fairs and farmers' markets. You'll be able to chat directly with the stallholder about the ingredients they use and prices are often reasonable.



READER OFFER

WIN! A FABULOUS BALM BALM BEAUTY SET

To kick-start your natural skincare regime, we have five Balm Balm Fragrance Free gift sets to give away. Each set contains a face balm, lip balm and all over body balm. To enter, go to www.vegetarianliving.co.uk/offers. Competition ends midday 2 September 2015.

ESSENTIAL FACTS AND figures

All the information and guidance you need to support your vegetarian lifestyle.

Guideline Daily Amounts

An increasing number of food labels now carry Guideline Daily Amounts (GDAs). These little figures provide a quick and easy indication of the nutrients contained in food, displayed as a percentage of your recommended daily allowance. Although GDAs vary depending on your age and how active your lifestyle is, the figures provide a handy tool for maintaining a healthy diet for you and your family. The tables below give the recommended amounts for each of the five food groups typically displayed on labels, as well as protein and carbohydrate figures to help you achieve a balanced meat-free diet.

ADULT GDAs

	Men	Women
Energy (calories)	2,500	2,000
Carbohydrates (g)	300	230
Of which sugars (g)	120	90
Fat (g)	95	70
Of which saturated (g)	30	20
Protein (g)	55	45
Fibre (g)	24	24
Sodium (g)	2.4	2.4
Salt (g)	6	6



KIDS' & TEENS' GDAs

BOYS	4-6 yrs	7-10 yrs	11-14 yrs	15-18 yrs
Energy (calories)	1,700	1,950	2,200	2,750
Carbohydrates (g)	215	245	275	345
Of which sugars (g)	85	100	100	140
Fat (g)	65	75	85	105
Of which saturated (g)	20	25	25	35
Protein (g)	20	28	42	55
Fibre (g)	14	14	15	24
Sodium (g)	1.1	1.8	2.4	2.4
Salt (g)	3	5	6	6

GIRLS	4-6 yrs	7-10 yrs	11-14 yrs	15-18 yrs
Energy (calories)	1,550	1,750	1,850	2,100
Carbohydrates (g)	195	220	230	265
Of which sugars (g)	75	85	90	105
Fat (g)	60	70	70	80
Of which saturated (g)	20	20	25	25
Protein (g)	20	28	28	45
Fibre (g)	14	14	15	24
Sodium (g)	1.1	1.8	2.4	2.4
Salt (g)	3	5	6	6

FORAGING AND THE LAW

Before you head out for a foraging trip, it's important to be aware of the legal issues that might impact on your activities – although the good news is that the law is on your side!

- The Theft Act (1968) states that in the case of mushrooms or plants growing wild on any land, you may take away foliage, fruit or parts of the plant without committing an offence, provided you are not taking them for commercial purposes. However, if you intend to sell the mushrooms or in some other way profit from them, you are breaking the law by taking them without the owner's permission.
- Be mindful of laws on trespassing when foraging, too. Unless the area you are in is common land, open access land, or a public right of way, then you are trespassing by entering it without the owner's permission, and the land owner has the right to ask you to leave by the shortest reasonable route, if they find you there.
- The Wild Mushroom Pickers' Code of Conduct, published by Natural England, gives guidance on good practice when foraging; in particular, it recommends that you ask permission of the owners of the land you are foraging on, follow the Country Code, and minimise damage to vegetation and the natural area. For more information, see www.bms.ac.uk/Code.html.
- Check on local by-laws before you head out too, as these may contain further restrictions; for example, some by-laws ban the collection of forest produce, which would include mushrooms.

RECIPE TERMS

Don't be put off if a recipe uses terms you're not familiar with. A number of foods – including a large number of vegetables – have different names in the US and UK, so use this quick reference guide to identify ingredients.

UK

Aubergine
Bicarbonate of soda
Broad beans
Celeriac
Chickpeas
Chicory
Coriander
Cornflour
Courgette
Double cream
French/green beans
Groundnut oil
Haricot beans
Icing sugar
Pepper (capsicum)
Polenta
Rapeseed oil
Rocket
Soya
Spring onion
Swede
Treacle

US

Eggplant
Baking soda
Fava beans
Celery root
Garbanzo beans
Endive
Cilantro
Cornstarch
Zucchini
Whipping cream
String beans
Peanut oil
Navy beans
Confectioners' sugar
Bell pepper
Cornmeal
Canola oil
Arugula
Soy
Scallion
Rutabaga
Molasses

Conversions

Use these handy conversion guides to help you out in the kitchen. For readers in Australia or the USA who prefer to use cup measurements, try an online converter, like the user-friendly calculator at www.theonlineconverter.co.uk.

WEIGHT

10g	¼oz	700g	1lb 9oz
25g	1oz	800g	1lb 12oz
50g	1¾oz	900g	2lb
75g	2¾oz	1kg	2lb 4oz
100g	3oz		
125g	4½oz		
150g	5½oz		
175g	6oz		
200g	7oz		
225g	8oz		
250g	9oz		
275g	9¾oz		
300g	10½oz		
325g	11½oz		
350g	12oz		
375g	13oz		
400g	14oz		
425g	15oz		
450g	1lb		
500g	1lb 2oz		
600g	1lb 5oz		



OVEN TEMPERATURES

Celsius	Fahrenheit	Gas mark
110	225	¼
130	250	½
140	275	1
150	300	2
170	325	3
180	350	4
190	375	5
200	400	6
220	425	7
230	455	8

VOLUME

30ml	1fl oz
50ml	2fl oz
100ml	3½fl oz
125ml	4fl oz
150ml	5fl oz (¼ pint)
175ml	6fl oz
200ml	7fl oz
300ml	10fl oz (½ pint)
400ml	14fl oz
500ml	18fl oz
600ml	1 pint
700ml	1¼ pints
850ml	1½ pints
1 litre	1¾ pints
1.2 litres	2 pints

SOURCE: Guild of Food Writers

VEGETARIAN & VEGAN ALTERNATIVES

The shelves of health food stores and large supermarkets offer vegetarians and vegans a huge range of healthy and nutritional alternatives to meat and dairy. Popular options include:

Agar: A vegetable-based gelatin that can be used in recipes for thickening or jelling.

Cheese* substitutes: A range of dairy-free cheese substitutes are available: soya cheese comes in a variety of flavours and textures similar to dairy cheese; tofu cheese has a mild salty taste, but absorbs flavours well. Brands to look out for include Sheese – which produces a wide range of 100 per cent dairy-free cheeses, including spreads and blue cheese alternatives – and Cheezly. Tofutti produces a mozzarella-style dairy-free cheese with good melting qualities.

Egg replacer: A powdered formula of starches and leavening agents which can be used in recipes that call for eggs. Popular brands include Ener-G and Orgran No Egg.

Mycoprotein: A meat-free protein, and the main ingredient in the popular brand Quorn. Produced from a member of the fungi family, it is naturally low in fat. (Note: this is not vegan, as it contains a very small amount of egg.)

Rice milk: A slightly sweet milk alternative. Thinner than soya milk, and with a slightly translucent consistency. Often used in dessert recipes.

Seitan: Made from wheat gluten, this vegan meat alternative can be used in Asian dishes instead of tofu. Both spongy and stringy in texture, canned seitan generally retains a lot of flavour from the brine it is stored in.

Soya milk: A dairy-free alternative to milk that has almost as much protein, less fat, no cholesterol and comparable levels of calcium. Look out for brands fortified with vitamin B12 to support a vegan diet.

Texturised Vegetable Protein (TVP)/soya meat/soya protein: A high-protein food made by processing defatted soya flour to extract soluble sugars. Often used as a meat replacement.

Tofu: Made from soya beans, and popular in East Asian cuisine. High in protein and rich in vitamins, minerals and polyunsaturated fat, with no cholesterol.

**Vegetarians beware! Some cheeses by law can never be vegetarian (e.g. Parmesan, Gorgonzola and taleggio) because they contain animal rennet; in which case you should seek a cheese alternative.*

Useful organisations

The Vegetarian Society

A registered charity committed to promoting the health, environmental and animal welfare benefits of a vegetarian diet.
Tel: 0161 925 2000
Email: info@vegsoc.org
www.vegsoc.org

The Vegan Society

An educational charity that provides information and guidance on various aspects of veganism.
Tel: 0121 523 1730
Email: info@vegansociety.com
www.vegansociety.com

Vegetarian for Life

A charity providing sympathetic assistance to older vegetarians and vegans and their families throughout the UK.
Tel: 0161 445 8064
Email: info@vegetarianforlife.org.uk
www.vegetarianforlife.org.uk

Viva! Health

A registered charity set up to monitor and explain the increasing amount of scientific research linking diet to health.
Tel: 0117 944 1000
www.vivahealth.org.uk

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)

The largest animal rights organisation in the world.
Tel: 020 7357 9229
Email: info@peta.org.uk
www.peta.org.uk

Vegetarians International Voice for Animals (Viva!)

Vegetarian and vegan group with everything you could need to change to a plant-based diet.
Tel: 0117 944 1000
Email: info@viva.org.uk
www.viva.org.uk

govegan

While the tips we suggest are vegan-friendly at the time of going to print, please always check packaging for ingredients before buying, as companies may choose to change them at any time. We often suggest that recipes are vegan if all ingredients listed are generally found to be vegan, for example, red Thai curry paste or vegetable stock, but it always pays to check first.

Definitions

The Vegetarian Society defines a vegetarian as 'someone living on a diet of grains, pulses, nuts, seeds, vegetables and fruits with or without the use of dairy products and eggs. A vegetarian does not eat any meat, poultry, game, fish, shellfish or crustacea, or slaughter by-products'. Other terms used to describe variations of a meat- and fish-free diet include:

Lacto-ovo vegetarian: The most popular type of vegetarian. Eats both dairy products and eggs.

Lacto-vegetarian: Eats dairy products but not eggs.

Pescatarian: Abstains from eating meat but eats fish and seafood.

Vegan: Does not eat dairy products, eggs or any other animal products, nor use any products derived from animals.

vegetarian LIVING

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Looking for fresh ideas in the kitchen? *Vegetarian Living's* food writer Sarah Beattie presents over 150 exciting recipes using seasonal ingredients, with ideas for everything from simple midweek meals to dishes for a special feast.

Enjoy a sample of Sarah's innovative cooking with this quick and easy recipe from her new book, *Meat-free Any Day*.

'I guess this is a sort of Turk-Mex fusion salad - the Turkish mezze staple of roasted aubergine but with the Mexican chilli twist. "Fajita" means "sash" and refers to the way the aubergines are cut into strips.'



Follow Sarah on Twitter
[@sarahbeattiegra](https://twitter.com/sarahbeattiegra)



Fajita salad

Serves 4 | Prep 10 mins | Cook 10 mins

1 large crisp lettuce, e.g. Romaine or Webbs Wonder

1 cucumber

1 aubergine, halved and thinly sliced lengthwise

1 large pepper, deseeded and sliced juice of 1 lime

2 tbsp plain flour

2 tsp ground chilli

oil

200ml sour cream or Greek-style yogurt

1 clove garlic, crushed

1 tbsp chopped coriander salt and pepper

1 Wash, dry and shred the lettuce. Put in a big bowl. Using a swivel-bladed peeler, cut the cucumber into thin ribbons and mix into the lettuce.

2 Lay the aubergine and pepper strips out on a large tray or platter. Squeeze over the lime juice, turning the strips until they are all covered. Mix the flour and chilli together in a fairly large freezer bag. Put the strips in the bag, a few at a time, and shake until covered.

3 Heat the oil in a large pan to a depth of about 3cm. When the oil is smoking, fry the aubergine and pepper until nicely browned. Don't fry too many strips at once. Drain on kitchen towel, then place on top of the lettuce.

4 Mix together the sour cream or yogurt with the garlic and coriander. Season with salt and pepper. Spoon over the salad and serve.

Recipe taken from *Meat-free Any Day* by Sarah Beattie (Select Publisher Services Ltd, £14.99).

READER OFFER

SPECIAL OFFER!

Vegetarian Living readers can buy *Meat-free Any Day* for the discount price of £9.99. To order your copy, call +44 (0)1202 586848 or order online at www.selectps.com.

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IRON BOOST

Winner of the Best New Organic Product Award at the Natural & Organic Products Exhibition in April 2015, Viridian Organic Liquid Iron contains a unique, fully-certified organic source of iron extracted from *Murraya koenigii* leaves, together with extracts from guava, lemon and amla to provide guaranteed levels of vitamins B and C. Complemented by Seagreens® organic arctic wrack seaweed, acerola, nettle, dandelion, honey and orange oil, this is a pleasant-tasting liquid formula that is suitable for all the family, including children, the elderly and for use during pregnancy and breastfeeding. Iron is essential for the healthy production of haemoglobin and red blood cells, contributes to the reduction of tiredness and fatigue, and also assists normal cognitive function.

● £20.25 for 200ml; to find stockists, visit www.findahealthstore.co.uk.

SMOOTH OPERATOR

Super Hydrating Face Cream is a new extra-rich moisturiser from Handmade Naturals, which has been blended to hydrate dry skin and keep signs of ageing at bay. With nourishing cocoa butter, avocado and borage seed oils, it can be used as a night moisturiser for normal/combo skin types, plus it's vegan, 100% natural and certified cruelty-free.

● £11.50 from www.handmadenaturals.co.uk or call 01270 877516.



NO MORE MOULD

The Ecozone room dehumidifier is perfect for preventing unwanted damp in your kitchen, bathroom and throughout your home, and it's ideal for other spaces such as caravans and garages too. This nifty gadget absorbs moisture and reduces the likelihood of mildew, mould and musty smells. Approved by Allergy UK, this device is cost-effective and refillable.

● £5.99 from Homebase stores or online at www.ecozone.com.



THE ESSENTIAL COLLECTION

A shopping guide to the latest products for your vegetarian or vegan lifestyle...

NATURAL ENERGY

Organic Essential Food is a uniquely formulated energy drink that contains pre-sprouted Aktivated Barley®, a powerhouse of important vitamins, minerals, essential fatty acids, amino acids and fibre. Combined with flax seed, quinoa, carrot, kelp, bilberry, apple, turmeric and spirulina, plus organic guava, lemon and holy basil extracts, this energy drink won the Platinum Award for Best Vegan Product in 2014.

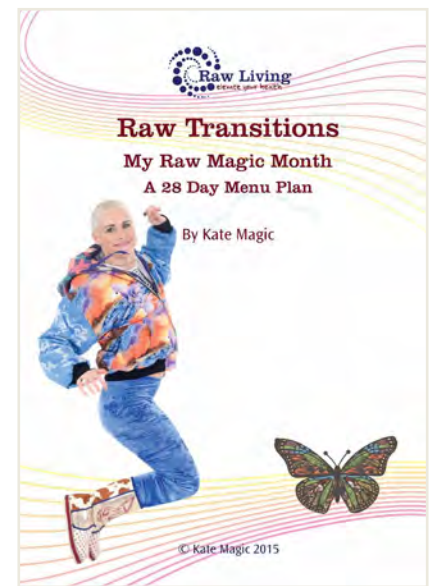
● £14.95 for 200g from www.gandgvitamins.com.



GET THE GLOW

Kate Magic's new 28-day menu plan, *Raw Transitions*, is designed to help you make the move to a raw lifestyle. Kate is one of the world's leading raw food authorities, and over the last few decades has worked with thousands of people all over the world, helping them navigate common issues and questions associated with the raw lifestyle. This how-to manual will make it easy for you to get the raw glow – and keep it!

● Available in digital and print format from £9.99 at www.rawliving.eu.



SCRUBBED TO PERFECTION

Now that the sun is shining, it's time to get those legs on show! Your skin may be looking a little dull, but you can prepare your legs for their summer holiday debut with a good exfoliation regime. The new natural and gentle Benecos Natural Body Peeling Scrub in Apricot & Elderflower effectively removes dead skin cells and leaves your skin looking silky and soft.

● £4.95 from www.benecos.co.uk.



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Alex Bourke of Vegetarian Guides is far from hungry on an autumn break in Hungary.



BUDAPEST

PLACES TO GO

Budapest is a compact, delightful, ancient city on the Danube. Historic, hilly Buda on the west bank has the castle, but stay on the east bank in downtown lively, level Pest for 25 veggie eateries, farmers' markets, health food and fashion stores, and museums. You can eat in restaurants for under a fiver and there are stacks of Airbnb apartments for £20 to £30 a night. Children are welcome everywhere and there are lots of playgrounds.

Napfenyes Etterem vegetarian restaurant on Rozsa Street is so popular that in March they opened another on Ferenciek with a pastries shop and performance space. Try the 'meaty' Hungarian dishes (£2-£5) such as bean goulash, stuffed seitan Kiev breaded in walnuts with rice and broccoli, spelt pizza with faux sausage,



or go light with a raw platter. The tasting platter for two (£10) has crêpes, fried vegan cheese, seitan cutlets, stuffed seitan, falafel, rice and peas, mash with onions, braised cabbage and tartar sauce. Their star dessert is somlo, a sponge cake with walnuts, carob sauce and whipped cream. Everything is vegan apart from honey.

Hummus cafés are all over Pest, with names like **Falafel**, **Hummus Point**, **Dr Hummus** and **Tik Tak**, serving up fast falafels and salads. **Hummus Bar** has 10 branches, and the two nearest Margaret Island are meat-free. Add hummus or veggies to your falafel in pitta, or expand to a platter with mushrooms, salads,

fava beans and chickpeas. They also serve soups, a tapas plate of six salads, and corner fillers like chips and stuffed vine leaves. Round off your meal with chocolate and nut baklava, homemade lemonade, mint tea or beer.

Wide-eyed dairy dodgers may get a bit overexcited at **Sweet Life Patisserie** (Edes Elet Cukraszda), the new vegan cake and chocolates shop and café. There are a dazzling daily dozen or more vegan, gluten-free cakes for under £1 – such as Black Forest, hazelnut chocolate, orange chocolate or vanilla strawberry – as well as cherry pie, millet peach tart, plus chocolates and ice cream.

Also recommended...

- **Kozmosz** vegan restaurant delights even meat-eaters with huge, hearty portions of bean goulash soup, seitan stew, gyros, burritos, burgers, cheesecake and layered chocolate pancakes.
- At the other end of the vegan spectrum, **Mannatural** raw food restaurant has 'living' dishes such as Hungarian fozelek made with squash and dill, green juices and smoothies, plus lush raw cakes.
- **Govinda** Hare Krishna restaurant on Vigyazo Ferenc has a vegetarian Indian buffet with Hungarian dishes, a salad bar and ginger lemonade.



- **Balamber** is a new weekday vegetarian café near Buda Castle with a cooked and a raw main daily dish, salads, soups and raw cakes.
- At **Edeni** restaurant, also in Buda, choose from a vegan buffet of salads, soups, stews, burgers and desserts.

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ESSENTIAL GUIDE

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